DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 472 081 CS 511 746

TITLE	Year 6 Planning Exemplification 3. National Literacy Strategy.
INSTITUTION	Department for Education and Skills, London (England).
REPORT NO	DfES-0135/2002
PUB DATE	2002-02-00
NOTE	64p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Department for Education and Skills (DfES), PROLOG, P.O. Box 5050, Sherwood Park, Annesley, Notts NG15 0DJ, United Kingdom, England. Tel: 0845 6022260; Fax: 0845 6033360; e-mail: dfes@prolog.uk.com; Web site: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/. For full text: http://www.standards.dfee.gov.uk/midbins/literacy/Y6Planning3.PDF.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	British National Curriculum; Characterization; *Creative Writing; Grade 6; Intermediate Grades; Lesson Plans; *Poetry; Short Stories; Story Grammar; Units of Study; *Writing (Composition); *Writing Instruction; *Writing Processes
IDENTIFIERS	England; *Narrative Writing; National Literacy Strategy (England)

ABSTRACT

Third in a series of booklets designed to assist Year 6 teachers with planning instruction to meet objectives of the National Literacy Strategy, this booklet contains Summer Term planning exemplification for three "revision" units (Narrative, Poetry and Non-fiction) prior to the Key Stage 2 tests and one unit after the tests (Extended narrative writing). After an introduction (background and context, Year 6 Term 3 Planning), the Revision Units section of the booklet offers framework objectives, a rationale, and week plans and transcripts, and resources sheets for the three units. For the Extended narrative writing unit, the booklet presents framework objectives, rationale, a 3-week plan, a short story, structural analysis, story frame overhead transparencies, a demo-write for chapter 1, a class grouping chart, and a flowchart. (RS)

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ED 472 081

The National **Literacy** *Strategy*

Guidance

Curriculum & Standards

Year 6
Planning Exemplification 3

Year 6 Teachers

Status: Recommended
Date of issue: 02/02
Ref: DfES 0135/2002

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Background and context

This is the third in a series of booklets designed to assist Year 6 teachers with planning (particularly supply teachers and those new to the year group). The first booklet, *Year 6 Planning Exemplification* (DfES 0729/2001) outlines the basic principles underpinning medium-term planning in literacy and shows how this could be exemplified for the year 2001–2. The booklet also contains detailed planning for two units on narrative writing in the Autumn Term. The second booklet (DfES 0799/2001) contains detailed planning for a further Autumn Term unit (Report writing) and two for the Spring Term (Poetry and Argument).

This booklet contains Summer Term planning exemplification for three 'revision' units (Narrative, Poetry and Non-fiction) prior to the Key Stage 2 tests and one unit after the tests (Extended narrative writing). Unit 5 ('Authors and texts') will be developed as a 'transition unit' and will be available in a more detailed form at Easter 2002 as part of an English and mathematics Year 6/Year 7 transition pack for schools participating in the Transition initiative. However, it will be available from LEAs, from DfES Publications (Prolog) and on the Standards website (www.dfes.standards.gov.uk/literacy) for use by any school.

Year 6 Term 3 planning

Year 6 Term 3 – Summer Term 2002 (before the KS2 tests)

Unit	Wks	Objectives	Text	Outcome
1 Reading and writing narrative	2	Text: 7, 18, 21 Sentence: 3 Word: 1, 2, 3	Short stories	Test practice in reading and writing narrative
2 Poetry	1	Text: 4	Poems	Test practice in reading poetry
3 Reading and writing non-fiction	2	Text: 15, 19, 22 Sentence: 1 Word: 1, 2, 3	Non-fiction texts	Test practice in reading and writing non-fiction

Year 6 Term 3 – Summer Term 2002 (after the KS2 tests)

Unit	Wks	Objectives	Text	Outcome
4 Poetry	1	Text: 2, 3, 13 Word: 5, 6, 7	Work by significant poets	Sequence of poems
5 Authors and texts	2	Text: 1, 5, 6, 8 Sentence: 2, 4 Word: 5, 6	Class novel; work by significant authors (same theme)	Reading journal
6 Extended narrative	3	Text: 10, 11, 14 Sentence: 4 Word: 1, 2, 3	Class novel and extracts	Extended narrative
7 Impersonal writing	2	Text: 16, 17, 20 Sentence: 3 Word: 4	Explanations, reports, reference texts	Formal report

Units exemplified in this booklet

Unit exemplified in Year 6 / Year 7 Transition Pack

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Revision Units

Framework objectives

Unit 1 Reading and writing narrative

Text

7. to annotate passages in detail in response to specific questions;
18. to secure the skills of skimming, scanning and efficient reading so that research is fast and effective; to review a range of non-fiction text types and their characteristics, discussing when a writer might choose to write in a given style and form;
21. to divide whole texts into paragraphs, paying attention to the sequence of paragraphs and to the links between one paragraph and the next, e.g. through the choice of appropriate connectives.

Sentence

3. to revise formal styles of writing:
   - the impersonal voice;
   - the use of the passive;
   - management of complex sentences.

Word

1. to identify mis-spelt words in own writing; to keep individual lists (e.g. spelling logs); to learn to spell them;
2. to use known spellings as a basis for spelling other words with similar patterns or related meanings;
3. to use independent spelling strategies, including:
   building up spellings by syllabic parts, using known prefixes, suffixes and common letter strings:
   - applying knowledge of spelling rules and exceptions;
   - building words from other known words, and from awareness of the meaning or derivations of words;
   - using dictionaries and IT spell-checks;
   - using visual skills, e.g. recognising common letter strings and checking critical features (i.e. does it look right, shape, length, etc.).

Unit 2 Reading poetry

Text

4. to comment critically on the overall impact of a poem, showing how language and themes have been developed.

Unit 3 Reading and writing non-fiction

Text

15. to secure understanding of the features of explanatory texts from Year 5 term 2;
19. to review a range of non-fiction text types and their characteristics, discussing when a writer might choose to write in a given style and form;
22. to select the appropriate style and form to suit a specific purpose and audience, drawing on knowledge of different non-fiction text types.

Sentence

1. to revise the language conventions and grammatical features of the different types of text such as:
   - narrative (e.g. stories and novels);
   - recounts (e.g. anecdotes, accounts of observations, experiences);
   - instructional texts (e.g. instructions and directions);
   - reports (e.g. factual writing, description);
   - explanatory texts (how and why);
   - persuasive texts (e.g. opinions, promotional literature);
   - discursive texts (e.g. balanced arguments).

Word

As for Unit 1 'Reading and writing narrative'

Rationale

By the Summer Term, most children in Year 6 are experienced readers and writers. They have read and written extensively across a variety of types of text throughout their schooling. The Key Stage 2 English test assesses this knowledge, skill and understanding by asking the children to engage in reading and writing texts, not by 'jumping through decontextualised hoops'. Teachers have been advised in guidance from NLS and QCA not to embark on intensive test revision too soon but to continue to teach so that the children become even more proficient readers and writers.

> Throughout the Autumn and Spring Terms in Year 6, the Literacy Hour should not be suspended in favour of continuous 'practising' for the end of the Key Stage test. Rather, it should be used to teach children the compositional skills of planning, structure, sequence, sentence construction, use of appropriate language, etc. and teachers should use group work for writing conferences to review, evaluate and refine work in progress. Many children fail to make sufficient progress because they spend a disproportionate amount of time practising inadequately developed skills which can and should be taught more directly *(2001 Revision guidance for Year 6 pupils: The use of the Literacy Hour www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy)*.

The lessons in Planning Booklets 1 and 2 exemplify such teaching for the Autumn and Spring Terms. The revision units in this booklet are designed to enable children to harness that knowledge, skill and understanding so that they give a good account of themselves in the tests which mark the end of their primary schooling. In the reading units, children revise how to access text quickly and efficiently and how to read questions carefully, recognising the level of answer implied within the questions. In the writing units, children interpret questions, practise fast planning for a number of text types and construct meaningful texts appropriate for the stated purpose.

Resources

There are plans for each of the five weeks of revision. They refer extensively to test papers from 1995 – 2001 and the associated QCA mark schemes. Most schools have copies of these papers and mark schemes and all schools have been sent Test Base, a CD-ROM, produced by QCA, containing this material. Individual copies for the children of some of the test reading and answer booklets are required for these units. The plans also refer to Resource Sheets 1–10. These:

- contain detailed points common to different aspects of reading and writing, e.g. Resource sheet 1, or;
- provide an example for a specific activity, e.g. Resource Sheet 10.

Mixed-age classes

The lessons are specifically intended as revision for the Year 6 tests. In mixed-age classes, the lessons would be appropriate for Year 5 children but probably not suitable for younger children.

Spelling and handwriting

The teaching objectives for spelling on pages 3 and 4 are not covered in this booklet. It is anticipated that teachers have a routine for practising spelling and handwriting prior to the Key Stage 2 test.

Year 6 Term 3 Narrative reading unit

Mon	**Shared reading and writing** (40 mins) Model and discuss strategies for accessing narrative text (Resource Sheet 1). Ask children to read text individually using strategies they used. Read the instructions on page 3 of the Answer booklet and then discuss routine for reading questions and illustrate with some of the test questions, but don't answer them. (Resource Sheet 2). (e.g. *No more school? – 2000 KS2 test*). Demonstrate the process for answering question 1. Give children 2 minutes to write the answer to question 2, then take responses and explanations as to how they located the correct answer. Repeat with questions 3 and 4. Using information in the mark scheme, discuss the nature of the answer expected to question 5 to gain two marks; illustrate the sorts of answers which would fall short of two marks.	**Independent / guided work** (10 mins) Children answer questions 6, 7 and 8 independently.	**Plenary** (10 mins) Discussion of children's answers in relation to mark scheme.
Tues	**Shared reading and writing** (25 mins) Ask the children, in pairs, to retell to each other the story *No more school?* Ask them to describe the strategies needed when reading test questions. Give the children 3 minutes to write the answers to question 9, then take responses and explanations as to how they located the correct answers. Repeat with question 10. Using information in the mark scheme, discuss the nature of the answer expected to question 11 to gain three marks; illustrate the sorts of answers which would fall short of three marks.	**Independent / guided work** (15 mins) Children answer questions 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 independently.	**Plenary** (20 mins) Discussion of children's answers. Begin to analyse how questions are asked and make a list of things to notice in questions and the sorts of answers required (e.g. *retrieving information, deducing opinion*).
Wed	**Shared reading and writing** (60 mins) Remind children of the strategies for accessing narrative text (Resource Sheet 1). Ask children to read text individually using strategies (e.g. *Leaving Home – 1998 KS2 test*). Discuss the strategies they used. Look at the list started the previous day of the sorts of questions that can be asked about narratives and the different levels of answers that merit one, two or three marks. Ask the children, in pairs, to devise a question which would require a one-mark answer from the first part of the story (e.g. when Clara was in bed). Take some of their suggestions and discuss. Repeat with questions requiring two and three marks. Read the first test question and compare with the questions the children made up. Read question 5 and establish that the information is not given but implied in the text. Draw the children's notice to the fact that this question still only carries one mark. Questions requiring one-mark answers can be retrieval or deduction. Continue reading the questions, picking out the key words in the questions and noting the expected level of answer. Add to list of 'things to look for in questions'.		
Thur	**Independent/guided work** (30 mins) Children answer the test paper *Leaving Home*.	**Plenary** (30 mins) Review the children's answers.	
Fri	**Independent/guided work** (30 mins) Children read and answer questions independently on '*The Astral*' (1997 test).	**Plenary** (30 mins) Discussion of text and review of children's answers.	

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Transcript of lesson for Day 1

(taught by Year 6 teacher, Jude - children's responses and contributions indicated by series of dots .....)

We're going to start our preparation for the tests today. Do you remember I told you last week that we'd start looking at some real test papers? We're going to do this for the next few weeks in the Literacy Hour, so you get very familiar with the way the tests are laid out, and the different sorts of questions you might get. Then when you take your test you'll be really confident and know exactly what to do ..... Yes, Daniel, it's a bit like rehearsing for a performance. Now, in the reading test, you'll be given a booklet to read, and another booklet to write your answers in. If you opened the reading booklet and saw this (showed OHT of Contents page of 'Built to Last?' - 2000 test), can you tell me what you're going to have to read? ..... Good, Charlie, you've seen straight away that there's a story first, then some non-fiction pieces in Section 2. There usually are two or three sections with different kinds of texts in them. We're only going to be looking at reading and answering questions on stories, or narratives, this week - we'll do some preparation on non-fiction and on poetry in other weeks.

I am going to ask you to read the story in this Built to Last reading booklet but before I do, I am going to read one to you and we will check the strategies you need to use when you read a short story in a test. Watch what I do. [Put up OHTs, read the story and circled names of characters and some other significant words and phrases, sketched a couple of reminder drawings and decoded a few tricky words. Explained why I was doing it.....]

..... Now your turn. You have 10 minutes to read this story No more school? Pick up your pencils and use them to guide you through the story. Make only just enough marks to help. When you have finished, you can make a note on your white boards of the strategies you used to help you read the story quickly and fix it in your heads.....

..... before we talk about the general strategies, let's check a few words. [Pointed to the word 'sycamore' on the first page.] Marnie, don't tell me what this word is - what is it the name of? ..... Yes, the tree. We know Kevin was looking at a tree and it says 'It was a half-dead ..... yes, Pritpal? ..... sycamore' that had been blasted during the winter by a storm. Had you heard of a sycamore tree before? ..... but it doesn't matter, does it, because you can tell it must be a tree because of the sense. So even if you can't read or don't recognise all the words, you can work out the gist of it ..... What about this one? .....

..... Now let's look at what you did to fix the story. Blane, what marks did you make on the first page? ..... Good, you fixed a time (May), place (school) and one of the characters (Kevin). Cary, I noticed you have put arrows at the beginnings of some of the paragraphs - why? ..... I suppose you could call them scene changes. So, Kevin was in class, by the tree, back in class, home, science lab in school, etc ..... and you put in the time-lapses instead, Susan. You make a good point there; you mustn't clutter

the text with marks. That will just be confusing when you come back to it to look for the answers to the questions - just some marker points such as changes in place or time to help you to structure it..... Absolutely, Ayinde, the pictures are very useful markers for where to find information quickly.

.....Right, that brings me on to the questions. I'm going to read you the instructions about questions in this answer booklet. [Read aloud page 3 of booklet on OHT.] So that tells you to be ready for all these different kinds of question, but also you need to know a few other things, and I'm going to write these on the board so that we can refer to them again. Firstly, sometimes the questions tell you which page to look at for the answer, so you need to find it quickly and reread the necessary part, not the whole page. Here's an example - question 7 [Read this question] where you need to find the section on page 6 with those two words in bold in it, and reread it. Secondly, go through the questions one after another. Don't miss some out and jump ahead, because often you'll only be able to answer one question if you've thought about the question before it. Thirdly, look at the number of marks there are for each question, written under a little box next to the question. If there are 2 or 3 marks for a question, then either you're being asked to retrieve several pieces of information, or you might be being asked to dig a little deeper, perhaps using deduction to explain the reasons for a character's behaviour, or analysing the author's language, and giving your opinion. Fourthly, always read the questions very carefully indeed, asking yourself: 'What sort of question is this?' And that's what we're going to do now, really look at some questions very closely. [Gave out copies of answer booklet.]

Question 1. [Read instructions, question and possible answers aloud.] Now although I'm pretty sure I know the answer, I'm quickly going to check back to the start of the story to make sure I don't make a careless mistake - that's right, it was outside his school so I'll put a ring round that answer. Just notice, will you, that two of the answer choices begin with 'in his' and two begin with 'outside', which means it would be easy to make a mistake and pick the wrong one. Now I'll give you two minutes to answer question 2 ..... Yes, it is 'came apart'. How did you work it out? .....Right, you need to find the right section of the story. Anything you needed to beware of in this question? ..... Good, you have to read the parts of the sentence either side of the answer choices, not just the words, 'When the egg', but 'Kevin found an unusual bug inside it' as well. Now I want you to answer questions 3 and 4 please .....Any problems? No, there shouldn't be, as long as you read the question carefully. These are one-mark questions, the first few questions usually are, but you'd be surprised how many people waste them by being careless, so make sure you're not.

OK, what do you notice about question 5? .....Yes Alfie, well done, it's a two-mark question. What did I say earlier about 2 and 3 mark questions? It's here on the board..... Yes, thank you. Let's reread it and then talk for one minute with the person next to you about 'What sort of question is this? What's it really getting at?' .....Yes, you're being asked to work something out. Those words, 'Why do you think' are a clue, aren't they? It's not just about finding the right bit of information like the first four

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questions ..... Good, Errol, you must find and read the relevant part on page 6 – everyone do that now please. ..... Yes, he wanted to keep it a secret. If you wrote that as your answer, you'd earn one mark, because you've explained that he didn't want his friend to know what he really had in his pocket. To get two marks, you need to say why he wanted to keep it a secret. So look in the text, see if you can find a reason. Anyone? ..... Good, because he thinks an adult will take it from him if they find out about it, and he won't have a chance to really look at it properly. If you just say that his friend might have told an adult, that doesn't explain what Kevin was afraid would happen.

I'm going to give you 10 minutes to answer questions 6, 7 and 8 on your own. Remember what I've said about rereading the relevant part of the story, about seeing how many marks the question is worth, about thinking what it's really asking. Off you go, then. .....

OK, question 6 – what did you notice about the layout of the question? ..... yes, it's in two parts, but it doesn't give you a page reference. ..... True, Alfie, there's a picture that helps you find it. Now, part (a). What's the key word in the question? Absolutely, 'purpose' is the key word. It means the reason Kevin went to see Mr Cooper. And the reason was? ..... Exactly, because he had tried to find out what kind of bug it was on his own, as it says at the bottom of page 5, but he couldn't so he needed help. So if you just wrote, 'To show Mr. Cooper his photo of the bug', you wouldn't earn the mark, because you didn't give a reason for what he did, you just told us what he did in slightly different words. What about part (b)? ..... That's a good answer, 'He thought Kevin was playing a trick on him.' You need to have thought about how Mr. Cooper behaved, and the reason why. Now question 7. I already mentioned that you had to find those words in bold – who can give us an answer, then? ..... Yes, it's because the bug seems to look really ordinary, isn't it, when he's been imagining all sorts of exciting things about it? As long as you mentioned that it looked or behaved like any normal insect, that's fine. So it was important to read the next sentence, wasn't it, because the answer was in there, and not only in the bold text. Lastly for today then, number 8. Two marks for this. What strategy did you need to use to be able to answer this? ..... Good, you had to scan the text and find those two main points in the story. Where was the first one? ..... Yes, when he decided not to tell his friend what he'd found. Do you remember I said earlier that one reason why you need to work through the questions in the right order is that sometimes answering one question will help you answer another one? ..... Thank you, Charlie. Yes, you'd already covered this when you were thinking about question 5, hadn't you, so that helped you to find one of those two main points for number 8? What was the other? ..... Right, when he showed the photo to Mr. Cooper, he made a decision not to tell him about the bug, didn't he? ..... And because you've just answered question 6, that bit of the story is still in your mind, too. Well done, everyone.

Tomorrow we'll carry on with the questions for this story, and see how to tackle some of the three-mark questions too.

Year 6 Term 3 Narrative writing unit

The test-marking takes account of children's consistent use of full stops to demarcate sentence boundaries. It is, therefore, very important to focus on punctuation as you demonstrate writing and when you discuss children's writing.

Mon	**Shared reading and writing** (20 mins) With reference to Resource Sheet 3 discuss a narrative from a test (e.g. *If pictures could speak . . . – 1999 KS2 test*). Read and discuss the planning prompts (Resource Sheet 3). Demonstrate fast planning of the story (Y6 Planning Exemplification 1 – see Standards website www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy) emphasising the importance of the overall shape to create an effective story (purpose and organisation). Repeat the process with a different narrative genre (e.g. *Three Wishes – 2001 KS2 test*).	**Independent / guided work** (25 mins) Working independently, children plan two more narratives.	**Plenary** (15 mins) Children present their plans orally, respond and improve. Pay particular attention to how they plan to link the end to the beginning.
Tues	**Shared reading and writing** (30 mins) Enlarge the first paragraph of Script 2 *If pictures could speak . . .* on p. 49 of KS2 English tests mark schemes (QCA 1999). Discuss the effectiveness of the opening (Resource Sheet 4). Display an alternative opening written on the basis of your planning notes and Resource Sheet 4 and demonstrate writing the next paragraph (Resource Sheet 5). Bring out the language features as you write.		**Independent/guided work** (30 mins) Working independently, children complete the story leaving a space between each line to allow for later revision.
Wed	**Shared reading and writing** (15 mins) By agreement with the children, choose a good example (perhaps not the best) of their stories, enlarge and discuss its effectiveness in terms of style and punctuation. Then look closely at the ending. Ask other children to read out their endings. Even though the endings were planned on Monday, notice how different they are. Ask the children in pairs to decide on an even better final sentence to this story than they have heard from the class so far.	**Independent / guided work** (15 mins) Children read their stories to their response partners, looking in particular at the final sentence. Together, pick out the most successful parts of the two stories and some parts which could be improved. Each child revises their own story by deleting and adding in the space provided.	**Plenary** (30 mins) Enlarge one of the narrative scripts which gained a mark between 25 and 29 from KS2 English tests mark schemes (QCA 1999). Explain that this is the standard that the children are aiming for, or higher. With reference to the mark scheme, analyse with the children how the writing had achieved that mark. Discuss writing test papers in test conditions and routine for deciding which subject to write about. Go through the procedure with a past test paper (not the one to be used the following day). Ask them to locate which titles are stories.
Thur	**Independent/guided work** (60 mins) Test practice: timed writing (1 hour) under test conditions. Read the children the four titles from a past paper and explain that they should choose one of the narrative ones. Go round the room checking the children have all chosen one of the narrative titles and assisting them to choose appropriately if they haven't. Leave them to continue entirely independently.		
Fri	**Shared reading and writing** (20 mins) Responding and improving: show and discuss examples of children's successful plans and their stories. Use supported composition to improve less successful endings.	**Independent / guided work** (20 mins) Working independently, children revise and improve their story endings. Children whose endings were successful practise fast planning for another title.	**Plenary** (20 mins) Identify improvements. Review useful techniques for timed writing.

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Year 6 Term 3 Poetry reading unit

Mon	**Shared reading and writing** (60 mins) Discuss strategies for reading poetry (Resource Sheet 1) and illustrate using a poem (e.g. *Owl* by Pie Corbett, Resource Sheet 6). Explain to the children that they are going to read a poem in a booklet called *Spinners (1999 KS2 test)*. Read page 3 to the children and show them the pictures of the spider spinning its web on page 5 but don't go into any detail. Ask children to read the poem, *Spinner*, on page 7, individually, using some of the strategies they know about. Discuss the strategies they used. Read the instructions on page 3 of the Answer booklet and then discuss the routine for reading questions and go through all the questions, underlining the key words. Notice the reference in the questions to the first, second and third parts of the poem (Resource Sheet 2). Ask the children to write the answer to question 1. With reference to the mark scheme booklet, discuss the answers they give. Repeat with questions 2 and 3.			
Tues	**Shared reading and writing** (15 mins) Ask the children in pairs to reread to each other the poem, *Spinner*. Ask them to describe the strategies needed when reading test questions. Using information in the mark scheme, discuss the nature of the answer expected to question 4 to gain two marks; illustrate the sorts of answers which would fall short of two marks.	**Independent / guided work** (10 mins) Children answer questions 5, 6, and 7 individually.	**Plenary** (35 mins) Discussion of children's answers to questions 5, 6, and 7 and the nature of the answers required, e.g. information retrieval, deduction. Using information in the mark scheme, discuss the nature of the answer expected to question 8 to gain three marks; illustrate the sorts of answers which would fall short of three marks. Ask the children to write an answer to question 9 individually and then discuss their responses. Begin to analyse how questions are asked and make a list of things to notice in questions and the sorts of answers required (e.g. retrieving information; deducing opinion).	
Wed	**Shared reading and writing** (35 mins) Re-read the poem *Owl*. Look at the list started the previous day of the sorts of questions that can be asked about poems and the different levels of answers that merit one, two and three marks. Ask the children, in pairs, to devise a question which would require a one-mark answer. Take some of their suggestions and discuss. Repeat with questions requiring two and three marks. Remind children of the strategies for reading poems (Resource Sheet 1).		**Independent / guided work** (15 mins) Ask children to read the poem *City Jungle (2000 Welsh KS2 test)* individually using strategies outlined (Resource Sheet 7). Ask the children, in pairs, to devise questions which would require one-, two- and three-mark answers on the basis of their knowledge of the wording of questions and the expected levels of answers.	**Plenary** (10 mins) Take some of the children's suggested questions and discuss.
Thur	**Shared reading and writing** (20 mins) Read the test questions on *City Jungle*, picking out the key words in the questions and noting the expected level of answer (Resource Sheet 8). Compare to the questions the children made up.	**Independent / guided work** (20 mins) Children, individually, answer the test paper *City Jungle* (Resource Sheet 8).	**Plenary** (20 mins) Review the children's answers in the light of the mark scheme (Resource Sheet 9).	
Fri	**Independent / guided work** (30 mins) Children read and answer questions individually on *Prints (1995 KS2 test)*.	**Plenary** (30 mins) Discussion of text and review of children's answers.		

Extracts from transcripts of lessons for Days 1 and 3

(taught by Year 6 teacher, Jess - children's responses and contributions indicated by series of dots .....)

Day 1

Today we are going to turn our attention to poetry revision and I want to start off by having a good, close look at everything we know about how to read poetry. It's important that we all bear in mind that poems are usually shorter than stories, but much more intense. Often, the meaning - or meanings - of a poem are sort of 'hidden' quite deeply inside it and the challenge for the reader is to get to those meanings somehow; to work them out ..... a bit like a word-game, if you like. When people talk about deduction and inference in reading poetry, this is what they mean. You have to think about the clues.

Just a reminder for you! A lot of what we have already revised about how to access the meaning of a narrative text is going to be really useful here. There's a lot of crossover between the skills of reading fiction and the skills of reading poetry. So that also means that whatever revision we do on poetry will reinforce our narrative work - especially when we think about things like appreciating imagery, feeling an atmosphere or noticing changes that occur as the text moves on.

Everyone has a copy of a poem called Owl by Pie Corbett, which is new to the class. Let's first take a few minutes to read and appreciate the poem privately. Try to get a feeling for the structure of the poem, the subject matter and any main features that strike you. Note a few points on your white board and be ready to discuss..... Right, show me your white boards; what are the first impressions? ..... Obviously, it's about an owl..... Two verses and a one-line ending..... A very dark feeling about it all ..... set at night ..... dark and dramatic. Thank you. Lots of good points there. Well spotted; that eerie sort of owl-sound at the end; very atmospheric! ..... Good, you spotted that image of bandages being tied around the countryside ..... a bit like strangling, I agree with you ..... Not a lot of rhyming words ..... Short lines; one word or two words sometimes. OK, we have a pretty good idea of the poem we're dealing with. Excellent; we have completed the first step in our reading process. Just take a few minutes now to annotate your own copies of the poem. Draw boxes around the verses to show the structure and make a few quick notes.

..... Now we need to re-read more carefully, bearing all that in mind. This time, we've got to try to be even more sensitive to the images and ideas presented, and the words that the poet uses to build them. We really need to puzzle out what's going on here. I'm going to ask you to read the poem again, slowly and thoughtfully, then bounce your ideas off your talking partner. Be ready to feed back to me about the deeper meanings or hidden messages that you can spot. What is the theme of the poem, as opposed to the simple subject matter? Think about the differences between the first and second verses, too.

..... Great, I heard some well-focused talk going on there. Let's get together and share ideas. What did people spot this time? Even more importantly, how did you reach a deeper understanding? What strategies did you have to use to get there? Hands up ..... Mmm, I expect we would all agree with you about the theme of killing and death ..... the owl as a hunter and killer. Someone else? ..... Yes, you've made a really effective association there between the owl and darkness and death.

Good word someone chimed in there – 'sinister'! You did well to remember that from our revision of narrative: brilliant! So, what did we have to do to make those links. What had to happen in our heads? ..... Yes, the author gives some clear direction, doesn't he? Those words at the beginning of verse 2: 'Owl was death' ..... Yes, thank you, that comes just after the first real hint of the bird's true nature, doesn't it? – those last two lines of verse 1: 'Talons ready to seize and squeeze.' Explain to me how that hint works. Does the author actually mention death there? ..... No, you're quite right, he doesn't have to. Why? ..... Yes, because we all know what happens to little creatures that get seized and squeezed in the terrible sharp feet of an owl. But we have to think it through; the poet isn't spoon-feeding us. And I think we're starting to get to the main difference between the verses. What is the contrast? ..... Thank you. The first verse sort of describes the owl itself and hints at its killing power; the second verse focuses on the deathly power of the owl. Good detective work! Quickly make notes on your copies.

..... Right, can we look at the actual lines now? Can anyone spot any features – their length, their layout, the number of them, etc. – that add to the style of the poem and make it more effective? Talk to your partner and try to record at least two points on your white boards here..... Boards up, please..... Over here we've got a good point about the first two lines of each verse being very similar; almost the same, in fact. Good. But, can anybody develop that a bit? If they aren't exactly the same, there must be a key difference. What is that difference, and what does it do for the poem? ..... Good try; the first says the bird was 'darker', the second says it was 'death'. You've only described the difference, though. Try to analyse it now..... Anybody? ..... Yes, I agree, it does sort of summarise the progression from darkness and a hint of death in the first verse right into real deathliness in the second. Well done. And what about the effect of that near-repetition? What does it do for the reader? ..... Good answer: repetition can have a dramatic effect. Can anybody add to that? ..... Mmm, the start of the second verse made me think back to the first verse, too. So that is an additional effect, too. Can you think what I mean ? ..... Yes, from our narrative work again, cohesion. Of course.

Any other points on your boards about the lines? Yes, somebody has noted that the voice that you hear in your head when you read this poem 'talks' in short, dramatic chunks of meaning. Well done. Someone else has noted a slow pace too. Does the grammar make a contribution to that? And is the pace the same right through? Have a quick think about that with your partner, please..... OK, what do we think? Yes, it's not written in sentences. Can anyone explain how that affects the pace? ..... Of course, it means that the language doesn't flow quite as smoothly. Did anyone notice an increase in pace at all?

..... Oh, very nice, I like that connection ..... it does go into a quicker sort of 'house-that-Jack-built' rhythm for most of the second verse. Can you explain the effect that it has on the reader? ..... Brilliant; it almost makes you feel the swiftness of the shadow of death spreading over the hills. Very spooky!

Now I want to look at some of the more obvious poetic devices and see how the author used them. First of all, rhyme. There isn't much, but he really made it count. In pairs, analyse the effect of the rhyming words, 'seize' and 'squeeze', then find another obvious piece of wordplay and tell me what it does, and how it works. ..... OK, what do we think about the rhyme? ..... Of course, it's the only bit, so it stands out. Which makes readers do what? ..... Yes, notice it. So it has more impact. And the author needs it to have impact, because it is a heavy clue for us to think about. And the other thing? Hands up, who spotted the alliteration? Of course you did. What is its effect, and how does that work? ..... Naturally, it's hard to say three words together starting with 'st', so you end up having to say them slowly and deliberately. Try it! Are we right? And that makes another contribution to the drama and the impact.

Last of all, let's unpick that image in Verse 2. We already referred to it briefly at the beginning. Can anyone summarise? ..... Thank you, that image of the bandage tying up the countryside in knots. Very powerful; quite sinister too ..... it almost makes me think about a kidnap victim; all tied up and unable to see, and completely in the power of a merciless killer. Would you agree? What are the sinister words here? ..... Yes, 'tightened' , 'knot' and 'blindfold' ..... Yes, 'fear' too, though it's much more obvious and not quite so thought-provoking. Another powerful word in that verse? ..... 'Swamped'. Well done. Can you say a bit more? How does that make you react? ..... I agree; it's a really 'big' sort of word, isn't it? Sort of makes me think of drowning.

Day 3

Today we're looking again at the poem, Owl, which we first read on Monday. We've focused a lot on reading strategies we need for poetry ..... the kinds of thinking we do to get to the real meaning of a poem ..... a bit like solving a puzzle, we said. So, I'm going to give us all a few minutes to read through this poem again privately and have a good think about what it means and how we react to it. I want everybody to be conscious of the strategies they are using as they read.

Next, I want to shape today's discussion around the kinds of questions we might find in a test. We found already that test questions require us to use a range of different strategies. Let's check yesterday's list, and we can add to it as we work. Let's start with information retrieval. What did we say that was? ..... Yes, finding what the text says; finding points of information from the text. Good. We also found that the marks attached to a question can help us work out how to answer it – one mark for a simple finding of information or simple inference; two for more information or for some interpretation; three if you have to give a justified opinion or a detailed interpretation of imagery or do some detailed comparing and contrasting, etc.

Think about a one-mark information retrieval question that could be asked about this poem. Take a couple of minutes to discuss with your partner, and write your questions on your white boards. . . . . OK, boards up. Here's a very simple question: 'What creature is this poem about?' Good try, but can anyone say why it's a bit too simple? . . . . . Of course, it's so obviously about an owl. Why? . . . . . Yes, the title and the first word tell us straight away what the subject matter is. But I can see a more suitable question on this white board: 'What is it about the owl that the poem focuses on?' This one is a bit more related to theme, but it is still pretty clear. What would the key words be? . . . . . Absolutely. You'd have to highlight 'what' and 'focuses'. Now, can we paraphrase the question to make the meaning clearer for ourselves? . . . . . Good suggestion; something like, 'There is something about the owl that the poem is mostly about; what is it?' Do we think that's a fair question for one mark? Yes . . . . . not too simple; not too hard to answer.

And what would the answer be? Try it on your white boards now . . . . . Well done, it's about the fact that the owl was a hunting bird; a killer. This just needs a very short answer – something like yours, there . . . . . 'The owl was a killer.' . . . . . or even just your one word, 'hunting' at the back there. Well done. How do we know this, by the way? What strategies were needed to get to that understanding? . . . . . Yes, thank you. You just needed to keep reading. There's the point about its talons being ready to seize and squeeze at the end of the first verse. What else? . . . . . Well done. That second verse does make it pretty plain. . . . . Somebody just made a good point there. . . . . You can't just read the first question and then read the first part of the text, you have to have read and considered the whole poem to answer this question properly. Good point!

Now, a question worth more marks might ask you to do some deduction. What is that? . . . . . Yes, doing the Sherlock Holmes thing! Spotting the clues and coming to a sensible conclusion. Remember that making associations is an important part of deduction and inference. If you don't make associations, you won't get the full power of the hints and suggestions that you have to be sensitive to. It's a process of going beyond what is actually written to get to the meaning inside the poem. So, I want you to try to frame a two-mark question that focuses on the association, the relationship between the owl and the darkness in the poem. Are we all OK with that? . . . . . Do we appreciate that the owl is strongly linked to the darkness? . . . . . Remember that it is not just simple darkness – like a dark night, or a dark colour – that we are looking at here. Use your powers of association . . . . . What is darkness often associated with? Don't tell me now; work it into your questions and answers. OK, then, work in pairs again; discuss with your partner and write on your white boards. . . . . What have we got? Lots of you have written something like 'Why is the poem set at night?' or 'How is darkness important to this poem?' Yes . . . . . good one! Those both look like very simple questions, but we know that they're worth two marks, so they need a bit more than a simple answer . . . . . maybe two parts to the answer, or a bit of explanation to go with it. Back to our key words . . . . . here's a really important point . . . . . if a question uses the words 'why' or 'how' you've got a big clue that you have to explain or interpret something. A paraphrase of this might be . . . . . ? Yes, something like that . . . . . 'Explain why the dark night time setting is important to our

understanding of the owl.' Can everyone try to answer that one please, on the white boards now. See if you can come up with a one-mark answer, and a two-mark answer ..... and be able to explain the differences between them.....

OK, let's see what you've written for one mark ..... 'Owls hunt at night in the dark; they're nocturnal birds.' ..... good word there! One mark, or two? ..... Yes, I agree, it's still only worth one, despite that good word. Why? ..... Of course, because it only gives a simple fact ..... it's correct, but too simple to be worth two marks. What else would it need to earn another mark? ..... Let's see ..... Yes, most of you have brought out that link between darkness and death, or noted that a night-time setting is often used to increase tension, bad feelings, etc..... so you put in something extra about authorial technique. Well done; lots of those answers would be worth two marks .... and every mark counts!

Now, if we wanted to bump that up to a three-mark question, we have already found that we might have to offer a justified opinion or perhaps an interpretation with quotes. Can you put together a three-mark question focusing on this darkness thing? Talk to your partners, and really try to come up with a question that probes the text and challenges the reader. On your white boards, please..... Show me. Quite a range; good thinking. Let's look at this one ..... 'How does the author make the owl seem very powerful in the second verse of the poem?' Is everyone OK with that? Do we all get a feeling of that power? What are the key words? ..... definitely ..... 'author', 'how', 'powerful' and 'second verse'. Thank you. Can anybody paraphrase ..... yes, thanks: 'What is it that the writer did to make the owl come over as very strong?' So our clear focus is on what? ..... Yes, authorial technique ..... details of exactly how Pie Corbett made careful use of words and ideas to build up that idea of the owl's strength. In the second verse, remember! Make sure you focus on the right place in the text ..... there's no point in producing a Brain-of-Britain answer about the first verse; that won't get you any marks at all!

OK, so what would we have to do for three marks on this one? ..... Lots of good ideas there ..... we could explain the power thing; give details about the association - probably using quotes; Yes, I agree ..... we'd have to make and explain inferences. Do some reading between the lines, if you like ..... above, below and between the lines! Perhaps we'd offer a bit of interpretation. Let's do that now, on our white boards. OK, show me ..... Yes, good, someone has made a detailed explanation - with quotes - describing the way darkness spreads over the hills and showing how the owl flying through the darkness let it seem to spread out over much more land than a real-life owl could manage. Great. And we have another answer here that looks at the image of the owl flying around the countryside with bandages of darkness, and tying everything up. Excellent! Someone has referred to the fact that the owl must be really terrifying if it can make the hills so frightened they go blind! Well done to all of you who used words like 'The author used the words'.

Year 6 Term 3 Non-fiction reading unit

Mon	**Shared reading and writing** (30 mins) Discuss strategies for accessing non-fiction texts (Resource Sheet 1). Remind the children of the poem about spiders they read last week and explain that they are going to read the rest of the booklet today. Read them the introductory page 3 of the Reading booklet *Spinners (2000 KS2 test)*. Ask them to read the two double page spreads, one on spiders' webs and the other entitled 'The truth about Miss Muffet', individually, using appropriate strategies (pages 4 and 5, 8 and 9). Discuss the strategies they used for each text and the variety of sources of information, particularly on pages 8 and 9. Read the instructions on page 3 of the answer booklet and then discuss routine for reading questions and illustrate with some of the test questions, but don't answer them (Resource Sheet 2). Ask the children to answer question 1 individually and then take responses and explanations as to how they located the correct answer. Repeat with questions 2, 3 and 4. Discuss question 5, encouraging close reading of the explanations which are in note form to find which one matches each picture.	**Independent / guided work** (15 mins) Children answer questions 6 – 9 independently.	**Plenary** (15 mins) Using information in the mark scheme, discuss the children's answers to the questions. In question 7, ensure the children understand that the question requires them to indicate the intention of the author to create an effect and how they should express this in full.
Tues	**Shared reading and writing** (20 mins) Ask the children to describe the strategies needed when reading test questions. Ask them to find pages 8 and 9 of the Reading booklet and pages 10 and 11 of the Answer booklet. Point out that the first question is not asking a question, as such, but giving them an instruction to fill out the chart. Ask the children where they will find the information to do this. Ask them to write the answers for questions 1 and 2 and then check for any misunderstandings of the text. Ask the children to read question 3. Ask them to look back to question 7 on page 5 and to pick out the similarity ('Why do you think the writer ... ?). Discuss how they answered that question yesterday and how they need to answer this question (authorial intent). Discuss the wording of questions 4 – 7. Turn to page 14 and discuss the implications of the three marks for question 2.	**Independent / guided work** (20 mins) Children answer questions 4 – 7 and 1 and 2 on page 14 independently.	**Plenary** (20 mins) Discussion of children's answers. Consider the nature of the questions and how they compare with questions asked about narrative texts and poetry.
Wed	**Shared reading and writing** (60 mins) Remind children of the strategies for accessing non-fiction texts (Resource Sheet 1). Ask children to read text individually using appropriate strategies,(e.g. *Great Walls of the World (pages 11 – 13 2000 KS2 test)*. Discuss the strategies they used and the different ways the information is presented. Convert the information from the Concise Guide to Washington into a three-bullet 'fact box' and ask which fact is missing. With reference to yesterday's discussion about the sorts of questions which can be asked about non-fiction texts and the different levels of answers that merit one, two or three marks, ask the children, in pairs to devise a question which would require a one-mark answer. Take some of their suggestions and discuss. Repeat with questions requiring two and three marks. If they don't suggest it, ask whether the information on the page could, in any way, be presented in a chart, as in 'The truth about Miss Muffet' Answer booklet. Read questions 17 and 18 in the answer booklet and ask the children what sort of mistakes people might make when answering these questions. Ask half the class to discuss question 23 in pairs and the other half to discuss question 14 in pairs. Pair up the pairs to exchange thoughts on each question. Take some feedback centrally. Using information in the mark scheme, discuss the nature of the answers expected to question 27 to gain maximum marks.		
Thur	**Independent / guided work** (30 mins) Children answer all the questions on section 2 of the test paper *Built to last?*	**Plenary** (30 mins) Review the children's answers.	
Fri	**Independent / guided work** (45 mins) Under 'test conditions', children read the reading booklet *Ocean Voices (2001 KS2 test)* and answer all the questions in the answer booklet.	**Plenary** (15 mins) Review the children's answers.	

Transcript of lesson for Day 2

(taught by Year 6 teacher, Sandy – children's responses and contributions indicated by series of dots .....)

Let's start today by reminding each other of the different strategies we might need to use when we read test questions. We've been doing this for a few weeks now so you should be able to give me lots, really quickly..... Good, checking which part of the text it refers to, and re-reading it, yes ..... maybe underlining key words in the question ..... seeing how many marks it's worth, very important, why? ..... Good, both of you are right, it gives you clues about the depth of the answer you need to give, or sometimes the kind of answer ..... That's it, you might be asked to deduce information, to infer by reading between the lines, or ..... what else? ..... analyse something in the text..... Or interpret..... And most importantly, you need to be asking yourself 'What is this question really getting at? What's it asking me to do?'

Now I want you to find pages 8 and 9 in the reading book, and pages 10 and 11 in the answer booklet. Just organise yourselves so you can see both comfortably ..... good. Look at question 1, and tell me what it's asking you ..... Quite right, it's not asking anything is it, it's telling you to fill in boxes on a table. How many separate bits of information will you need to find? ..... Yes, four, because there are four boxes to complete. When I refer to the mark scheme, I find that if you fill in three of the boxes correctly you only get 1 mark, but if you fill in all four correctly you get 2 marks – the fourth box is worth a whole mark, so you need to make sure you find all four, don't you? What strategies would you use in order to be able to do that? ..... Right, first you need to locate the part of the text which will have the information about – who? ..... Yes, Dr Muffet, his name's in bold in the question. Where are you looking? ..... Good, we know from experience that the first questions usually refer to the earlier parts of the text, so you'll probably start scanning page 8 ..... Well done, you've picked out Dr Muffet ..... Yes, underlining will be a good strategy to use ..... underlining what? ..... two dates, a name and a job. Thanks, Kurt.

I want you now, on your own, to write the answers to question 1 and question 2 on your clipboards. Then we'll check them together in three minutes ..... Becky, read out your answers for number 1, please ..... Thanks, everyone get those right? Now number 2, please, Billie ..... That's a good answer, because it gives a reason. Billie hasn't just said that the language in those two lines in italics is different from nowadays, that doesn't say how it's different. She's said that some of the words are spelt differently from how we spell them now. Anyone got an alternative? ..... Yes, that's an acceptable answer too, saying that it uses words that we don't use any more, and giving an example of one of them – 'physicke'.

OK, on to question 3. Read it to yourself ..... now turn back to page 5 of the answer booklet and read question 7 on that page ..... What do you notice about the two questions? ..... Excellent, Todd, they both include the words, 'Why do you think the writer ... ?' So what sort of question will this be? What's it asking us to comment on? ..... Look at our checklist on the wall there to remind yourselves if you need to ..... Good, well done, Alison, authorial intent, that is, why the author chose those particular words, what effect was he or she aiming at? In your answer to question 3, to get both marks, you'd need to say that the author chose those words creeping and

tickling because they are words that can refer to spiders and to coughs and colds as well - we talk about a 'tickly' cough, don't we, or having a 'tickle' in your throat? And spiders creep along and if they walk on you they tickle..... You've made a useful point, Lee, all that work we did on poetry questions will help with questions like this one, that are about choice of language.

For the next few minutes, we'll look at the way the next few questions are worded, then I'll ask you to answer those on your own. Question 4 [Read this question aloud], what is it focusing on? ..... Yes, the effect on the reader. Those cartoons have been put there for a reason, and this question is asking you to think about what the reasons are. Question 5's in two parts, part (a). [Read this question aloud] is asking you to comment on .....? ..... Yes, good, we know from all our work on connective phrases when and why you'd use phrases like these. Part (b). [Read this question aloud.] What will you need to do? ..... Yes, scan the section on page 9 that has the two phrases in bold in it, and underline another one. The wording of question 6 is very precise. [Read this question aloud.] The first sentence tells you exactly where to look. Just read the second sentence and then tell me why you think certain words are in bold..... Well done, I'm sure you're right. It's to warn you not to use the words from the cartoon, or from anywhere else on the pages, but to write your answer using information that's in that paragraph, so you must make sure you include some of the information in your answer, but putting it into words that Dr Muffet might have used. Question 7 [Read this question aloud] - you shouldn't have any problems with, so long as you make sure you tick three boxes. Finally, I want you to turn to page 14 and look at question 2 there, because you can earn up to three marks for it. What do we think the key words are in this question? ..... Discuss it with your partner for two minutes..... Yes, I agree, 'fully', and 'all'. And I would also add 'evidence'. The mark scheme tells the marker to give one mark if the answer is a general one that summarises the contents of the booklet, and two marks if the answer shows that you've thought about the impact, or the effect, of at least one of the three texts about spiders, and how that might make someone change their mind about disliking spiders. But to get three marks, your answer needs to explain key points from two or more of the texts that could help to change people's minds. Right, now I'm giving you about 20 minutes to answer those questions. I'll write the numbers up on the board, questions 4, 5, 6, 7, and 2 on page 14 .....

Extract from 20-minute plenary

Before we get into how you answered question 5, I want to mention that in question 4, you were asked a different sort of question from any that we've looked at in the test papers for poetry or narrative. That's because we're looking here at non-fiction texts, and as you know, a very important feature of non-fiction is the way it's structured and the different ways that information can be presented to readers, depending on the purpose..... Yes, Todd, and the different language features too. When you're answering questions on non-fiction, be aware that there will probably be at least one question, and maybe several, about the way the text is presented, or structured, and the effects of that. Did anyone find there was another question you tackled on your own, apart from number 4, that did this? ..... Hannah says question 7 - that was about understanding the purposes of different texts. Any others? ..... OK, let's carry on going through these questions one by one and see if there are any others that are specifically about the 'non-fiction-ness' of these texts.

Year 6 Term 3 Non-fiction writing unit

The test-marking takes account of children's consistent use of full stops to demarcate sentence boundaries. It is, therefore, very important to focus on punctuation as you demonstrate writing and when you discuss children's writing.

Mon	**Shared reading and writing** (20 mins) Demo planning: using two different non-fiction questions from past papers, demonstrate creation of own planning frames in response to a particular writing stimulus, e.g. *Tried and Tested (2001 KS2 test)* (Resource Sheets 3 and 10). Emphasise need to adapt/combine familiar elements from known text types according to particular audience and purpose. Demonstrate note form planning using one of own frames (Resource Sheet 10).	**Independent / guided work** (25 mins) Working independently, children draw up two planning frames and complete note form plans for one frame.	**Plenary** (15 mins) Children present their plans orally, respond and improve.
Tues	**Shared reading and writing** (30 mins) Demo writing: using planning notes (Resource Sheet 10), demonstrate composing clear opening paragraph, with defin.tion, statement of purpose, etc. as appropriate.	**Independent / guided work** (30 mins) Working independently, children follow the plan and write remaining paragraphs, using sub-headings, bullet points as appropriate and leaving space for future revisions.	
Wed	**Shared reading and writing** (15 mins) By agreement with the children, choose a good example (perhaps not the best) of their reports, enlarge and discuss its effectiveness in terms of style and punctuation. Then look closely at the ending. Ask other children to read out their endings. Consider the sorts of ending sentences suitable for an evaluative report such as this one. Ask the children in pairs to decide on an even better final sentence to this report than they have heard from the class so far.	**Independent / guided work** (15 mins) Children read their reports to their response partners, looking in particular at the final sentence. Together pick out the most successful parts of the two reports and some parts which could be improved. Each child revises their own report by deleting and adding in the space provided.	**Plenary** (30 mins) Enlarge one of the non-fiction scripts which gained a mark between 25 and 29 from KS2 English tests mark schemes (QCA 2001). Explain that this is the standard that the children are aiming for, or higher. With reference to the mark scheme, analyse with the children how the writing had achieved that mark. Discuss writing test papers in test conditions and routines for deciding which subject to write about. Go through the procedure with a past test paper (not the one to be used the following day). Ask them to locate which titles are non-fiction.
Thur	**Independent / guided work** (60 mins) Test practice: timed writing (1 hour) under test conditions. Children given titles from past paper but asked to choose a non-fiction subject. Go round the room checking the children have all chosen one of the non-fiction titles and assisting them to choose appropriately if they haven't. Leave them to continue entirely independently.		
Fri	**Shared reading and writing** (20 mins) Responding and improving: show and discuss examples of effective structure, language and content. Use supported composition to improve less successful examples.	**Independent / guided work** (20 mins) Working independently, children revise and improve their own text.	**Plenary** (20 mins) Identify improvements. Review useful techniques for timed writing. Share 'helpful hints' for coping with tests.

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Transcripts of extracts from lesson for Day 1

(taught by Year 6 teacher, Sandy – children's responses and contributions indicated by series of dots .....)

.....Now we've read through all four tasks. In the test you will decide which one suits you the best and you will make that decision on the basis of your writing preferences and strengths. But for now I want us to have a go at *Tried and Tested* - the report – because we are practising non-fiction writing this week. You have the double page spread of the task and the planning sheet in front of you.

Let's unpick exactly what the task involves. That is the page on the left. You can see how the page is divided: at the top, a picture of the bag with writing above and below – the task itself marked by wide lines – four bullet points. From this information you need to answer three questions.. ..... Thank you, Liam – 'What'? 'Why'? and 'Who for?' What do I have to write? Why? And who am I writing it for? Now read it through on your own.....

Let's have some answers to my 'What', 'Why' and 'Who for' questions. What? ..... yes, a report, Why? ..... to say whether the bag was any good ..... and who for? ..... The company which makes the bag. Good, so what kind of report are we writing? Remember we write reports a lot in geography and science but when have we reported on how we made something? ..... Of course, when we made the slippers in D & T ..... yes, an evaluative report. Here we are asked to give the company information to help them improve the bag. They've asked for four particular things – in the bullets.

Now we need to consider what we are going to say and how we are going to say it. Let's turn to the planning sheet on the right. First the 'what'. Obviously we have to imagine that we've tested the bag out for a month. There are two boxes to help us make up some facts about the bag – things that worked well, things that could be improved. What are the sorts of things that we can say worked well? Look at the picture of the bag, look at the bullet points at the bottom of that page. Any suggestions? ..... Maryon? ..... I'll just jot down 'plenty of space'..... 'made of canvas, lightweight'. Sam? ..... ah, that's for the other column 'not waterproof' ..... 'pockets too small' .....

.....so we have lots of facts about the bag that you have discovered whilst you have been using the bag for a month – testing it out. Now we

need to decide an order of paragraphs. What planning frame do we usually use for a report? ..... Will a spider work here? ..... Let's try it. Let's put 'The bag' in a circle in the middle, opening paragraph at the top and closing paragraph down here, and round the edge let's put four circles for four paragraphs - we may not need them all. The opening and closing paragraphs are obvious. What would you put in the others? Lisa? ..... Yes, you could have just two paragraphs, one for things that worked well and one for things to be improved ..... that's another possibility, Mijan - you suggest we take one aspect of the bag and look at good and bad points in each paragraph. Can you give me an example? ..... Anyone think of another aspect? ..... So we seem to have three paragraphs - materials, size and strength. OK, let's rub out this other circle. Remind me what would go in the opening paragraph ..... Yes, and the closing paragraph? ..... Fine..... Yes, you should definitely make an overall judgement about the bag in the last paragraph.

Now, we've planned what we are going to say. How we are going to say it? For this we need to go back to the audience and the purpose. Audience - who are we writing for? ..... Yes, the company, the manufacturer, not your mum or your best friend, so what sort of language would you use? ..... quite formal.....Yes, and you'd want to put in technical, accurate language..... No, not slang words, so that you would be taken seriously. We've decided to include the good and bad points in each paragraph, so what sort of connectives would you be using? ..... Yes, you'd be borrowing from discussion writing, wouldn't you: 'on the other hand', 'however', etc.

Now person and tense. You are reporting on the testing you have carried out over the month. Look at the suggested opening of the report at the bottom of the planning page. It starts with 'I'. You are reporting back to the company so you write in the first person. What tense is that first sentence? ..... Yes, when you are telling the company what happened when you tested the bag, you write in the past tense but when you are describing the bag, you may use the present tense. That is fine .....

Resource Sheet 1 The Reading Test

Reading the *Reading book*

Pupils have a period of time to read the *Reading book* before they are given the questions. **They should be strongly encouraged to make marks on the *Reading book*** to help orient them quickly to the structure and meaning of each of the texts.

Pupils should be reminded to use the range of strategies with which they are familiar if they encounter words they do not immediately recognise; for example, finding the vowels and reading round them to make an attempt at pronunciation in the light of the immediate context and their own knowledge; using general word knowledge and understanding of syntax and context. They should be encouraged not to take undue time and labour – if they still do not recognise the word they should quickly read on. They will often find that text further down the page sheds light and if not, the questions will.
In the test situation, possible reading approaches for each type of text include:

Narrative

Pupils should be reminded to use any text marking strategies with which they are familiar and which can be used very quickly in the test situation (for example, underlining names of characters, putting a star or arrow when the main character(s) are in a different place or time, brief annotations).

- Read the story quickly but carefully – you are aiming to get an idea of the setting, characters and plot.
- Make a mental note of the names of characters, main events, changes of place and time, etc..
- Take note of what the pictures are telling you – this helps to remind you of what happened on a particular page.

Poetry

Understanding a poem can almost be like solving a puzzle – many of the meanings lie beneath the surface and have to be unpicked.

- Read through the poem once and decide what you think the poem is about.
- Read again to find clues to confirm your first thoughts of what it is about.
- Draw boxes round verses/sections; label each section/verse with a key word summing up what it is about.

Non-fiction

The wording of the title may suggest or confirm the text type, e.g. 'How to' probably indicates instructions; a title in the form of a question may indicate discussion or persuasion. However, pupils should understand that texts may be multi-purpose and of mixed type, e.g. not a 'pure' report, persuasion, etc. Reports may contain elements of explanation or recount; an argument may be presented within a letter format; an apparently balanced discussion may switch towards persuasion at the end.

- Skim across, up and down the page(s) very quickly to get a sense of the structure (headings, boxes, etc.)
- Then read each part carefully, making sure you read appropriately for the particular text type.
- Sketch in the framework – e.g. put a box around a definition, main sections of information, etc
- Be sensitive to changes between text types – mark each one that you notice.

Resource Sheet 2

Reading the *Answer booklet* and answering questions in the Reading Test

- When you open the *Answer booklet*, find the sections for each of the texts you have just read in the *Reading book*.
- Go back to the first section and quickly read all of the questions/instructions in the section.
- Go back to question 1 and underline the key words in the question/instruction and look at the number of marks obtainable.
- Find the text in the *Reading book* to which the question/instruction is referring
- Follow the instructions carefully.

Pupils should be confident in a routine for answering questions.

- *Answer booklets* for the reading test are usually organised into sections; each section contains questions on a different text in the *Reading book*. (There may be a couple of questions at the end of the *Answer booklet* which refer to all the texts.)
- *Answer booklets* clearly indicate the page or section of the *Reading book* to which it refers.
- They should analyse exactly what a question is asking for by, for example, quickly underlining the key words and thinking through what they need to do. Paraphrasing the question may help. They should note any multi-part questions and/or questions related to one another.
- In each section, pupils should be advised to work through the questions/instructions steadily and consecutively because the questions take the pupils through the text and develop their cumulative understanding of it. However, it is equally important that pupils do not waste time or lose confidence puzzling unsuccessfully over challenging items. After a reasonable attempt, they should be prepared to move on to the next question. Where appropriate, they could be encouraged to enter a provisional answer, perhaps for later revision. Pupils should be clearly reminded that they will find different levels and types of question, worth varying marks, distributed throughout each section of the test paper.
- Because the *Answer booklet* is organised by the reading texts, each section begins with a relatively easy question. Unlike other sorts of tests, pupils should not assume that because they have come to a question that they cannot answer, the rest of the booklet is going to be more difficult, as the next reading text will have easier questions on it.
- Some questions are in the form of simple instructions: for example, to *put a circle around* the best answer from a short multiple-choice selection, or to *find and list* particular words from the text. It should be noted that very few answers need to be

presented in grammatical sentences. Pupils can save time and effort by simply giving the required words or phrases. However, in the three mark answers, where explanations are required or where the pupil is expected to indicate authorial intent, full sentences could be necessary.

- The number of marks available for each question should be a guide to the depth or breadth of answer required. Less confident readers should be advised not to be intimidated by multi-mark questions – there are almost always one or two marks to be gained by having a go. For example, questions calling for information retrieval may offer a rising scale of marks for extended information. The information does not necessarily get harder to find and copy; it just takes a little more attention. Frequently, three-mark questions will call for *complex inference* or *active processing* of the text, with justification – e.g. *explaining* why a character felt/acted in a particular way, referring to details from action or description; giving an opinion or analysis referring to two or more elements and justifying the answer by close reference to the text. Even these, however, frequently allocate a rising scale of marks according to the complexity of the answer; almost every pupil can gain some of the marks.
- It should be noted that *recasting of information* and/or *simple inference* are often called for in even one-mark questions. Pupils cannot just assume that they are only being asked to *find and copy* in the one-mark questions. Careful reading of *all* questions and instructions is required.

RESOURCES

Resource Sheet 3 The Writing Test

Pupils have a period of time (15 minutes) in which to choose their piece of writing and make quick notes and plan. The initial read through of the booklet is supported by the teacher. In order to make the best possible choice of writing task, pupils need to be clear about the form of writing involved in each of the four choices – it is helpful for them to refer to the cover of the test booklet, which indicates this clearly.

Making the best writing choice

- Choose the subject and form in which you can do your best.
- Choose carefully as there isn't time to change your mind.

Pupils should be made clearly aware that their top priority for the test is to produce a script that shows personal writing skills to best advantage. Teachers should provide ongoing opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own writing performance and build a reasonable understanding of their strengths and weaknesses in both fiction and non-fiction text types. It may be appropriate for teachers to offer explicit guidance to individual pupils, during their guided writing sessions, on text types to choose or avoid.

Unpacking the task

- Read the task carefully, marking the significant words and phrases.
- Make quite sure what form of text you are expected to write e.g. story, letter, report.
- Find out the audience and purpose for the task.
- Decide what style would be the most appropriate, e.g. formal, chatty.

Before rushing into the planning, children need to read the task very carefully, underlining or circling the significant words and phrases. They need to be clear what form the text is going to take. But within that they need to establish what the purpose is and who the audience is so that they can decide on style and language features. Depending on the purpose and audience, a letter, for instance, could be a recount of an experience written in the past tense or a summary of the reasons for needing extra pocket money written in the present and alluding to future plans.

Planning

- Read the planning prompts carefully.
- Use the planning grids given or substitute your own.
- Even in non-fiction writing, you will usually need to invent some of the information.
- Plan in note-form in the tense you are going to write in.
- Plan **all the stages** in your writing right through to the end.

The tasks in the writing test generally offer a small number of helpful *prompts* for planning. These usually reflect some of the criteria that will subsequently be used to evaluate scripts. It is, therefore, important for pupils to read these carefully and plan to use them as fully as possible. Pupils need to be aware that the completion of some fast planning for the entire piece of writing is critical to the constraints of the test situation.

Planning sheets are given and should be used. Planning for structure may well go beyond what is given in the prompts.

In non-narrative writing tasks, pupils will be expected to use their knowledge of non-fiction text types. The content for non-narrative writing tasks may be true or invented. Pupils should be encouraged to decide their content and details at the *planning stage*, taking full advantage of real-life or reading experience to create a convincing body of material.

For best use of time, planning should be done in *note-form* only, using single words and very brief phrases.

To avoid potential confusion during the subsequent writing, pupils should be encouraged to plan using the *verb tense* in which the text will be written, e.g. use past-tense verbs for recount and conventional narratives; present tense for explanations and some reports. Teachers may wish to point out that some of the planning prompts in the *Instruction and planning sheet* may not have been written in the tense the children propose to write in.

It is at the planning stage that the conclusion should be considered in some detail, as it is more likely that pupils will write with appropriate pace and clarity if they maintain a clear sense of where their text is leading.

Opening and closing the text

- Use an opening sentence which makes the reader want to read on.
- Use a closing sentence which makes the reader think for a bit longer.

Pupils should be readily familiar with a range of strategies for introducing a text so that it claims the attention and interest of a reader. Textual flow is also greatly influenced by the opening lines. This will, of course, vary according to planned text type and content. Pupils should adopt a routine of mentally rehearsing possible opening sentences before committing their final choice to paper.

Question prompts often include a suggested opening. Although there is no compulsion to use these, teachers may wish to counsel less confident writers to do so in order to get their script started quickly and easily. More confident writers may wish to adapt and/or extend the given openings so as to impose personal style and begin gaining credit from the outset.

Pupils should be familiar with a range of strategies for rounding-off a text satisfactorily. This will also vary according to text type and content, and will be affected by the main body of the text. Final wording should be settled only after mental rehearsal, and should be shaped by a re-reading of the preceding lines.

RESOURCES

Resource Sheet 4 Narrative writing Day 2

Notes on opening of Script 2 (QCA mark scheme 1999 page 49)

- Opening sentence takes the reader straight into the story, though the tense is muddled.
- Information in the next two sentences explains the setting but would flow better if rewritten as one complex sentence – e.g. 'Walking through one of the gallery rooms on a school trip…'
- Unnecessary repetition of picture smiling.
- Use of direct speech would be more effective if alternative verb to 'said' were used, perhaps starting the sentence with the words spoken – e.g. ' "Take a seat please" murmured the portrait, in a deep voice'.
- Unnecessary repetition of 'I was on a trip with the school'.

There is little to suggest the narrator's feelings. This could be brought into the final sentence of the opening paragraph – e.g. 'I was so astonished I could hardly speak, but at last I managed to ask his name.'

Possible opening paragraph for 'If pictures could speak…'

'Stop biting your fingernails!' commanded a loud voice to my left. Guiltily, I put my hands in my pockets. I knew I was supposed to be on my best behaviour here at the gallery – our teacher had drummed that into us on the coach on the way here – but I didn't expect to get told off like that. Besides, as I looked around the room, I couldn't see who had spoken to me. None of the attendants was there; I was quite alone.

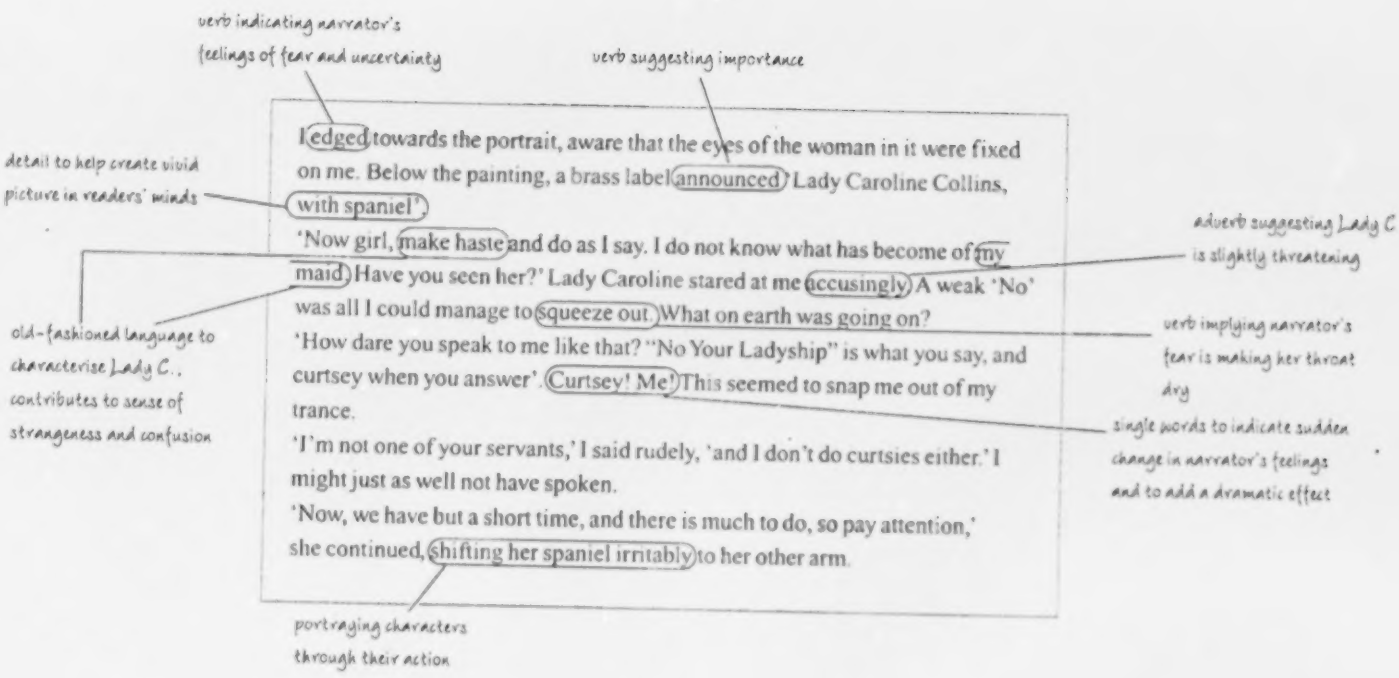
'It is unseemly – you must not do it again.' The same voice, full of authority, appeared to be coming from a corner of the room where there were several paintings that all looked hundreds of years old. No-one was there – just paintings. I was rooted to the spot. Someone, somewhere, must be playing a trick on me. Was I going to see myself on TV in a few weeks' time, looking foolish in a home video clip while the audience roared with laughter?

'Do not stand and gawp, child. Come nearer at once!' Now there was no doubt. The voice was coming from one of the portraits.

Resource Sheet 5 Narrative writing Day 2

Possible second paragraph for 'If pictures could speak…' – teacher demo-writing

- Purpose of this paragraph is to establish the characters.
- Important to use dialogue to reflect the title.


verb indicating narrator's feelings of fear and uncertainty
verb suggesting importance
detail to help create vivid picture in readers' minds
adverb suggesting Lady C is slightly threatening
old-fashioned language to characterise Lady C., contributes to sense of strangeness and confusion
verb implying narrator's fear is making her throat dry
single words to indicate sudden change in narrator's feelings and to add a dramatic effect
portraying characters through their action

I edged towards the portrait, aware that the eyes of the woman in it were fixed on me. Below the painting, a brass label announced 'Lady Caroline Collins, with spaniel'.

'Now girl, make haste and do as I say. I do not know what has become of my maid. Have you seen her?' Lady Caroline stared at me accusingly. A weak 'No' was all I could manage to squeeze out. What on earth was going on?

'How dare you speak to me like that? "No Your Ladyship" is what you say, and curtsey when you answer'. Curtsey! Me! This seemed to snap me out of my trance.

'I'm not one of your servants,' I said rudely, 'and I don't do curtsies either.' I might just as well not have spoken.

'Now, we have but a short time, and there is much to do, so pay attention,' she continued, shifting her spaniel irritably to her other arm.

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RESOURCES

Resource Sheet 6 Poetry reading

Owl

Owl
Was darker
Than ebony.
Flew through the night,
Eyes like amber searchlights,
Rested on a post,
Feathers wind-ruffled.
Stood stump still,
Talons ready to seize
And squeeze.

Owl
Was death
That swamped the fields,
For it flew through the dark
That tightened its knot,
That bandaged the hills
In a blindfold of fear.

Owl flew – who – who – who –

Pie Corbett

© Pie Corbett, from *An odd kettle of fish*, Macmillan Pupils' Books.

Resource Sheet 7 Poetry reading

City Jungle

Rain splinters town.

Lizard cars cruise by;
their radiators grin.

Thin headlights stare –
shop doorways keep
their mouths shut.

At the roadside
hunched houses cough.

Newspapers shuffle by,
hands in their pockets.
The gutter gargles.

A motorbike snarls;
Dustbins flinch.

Streetlights bare
their yellow teeth.
The motorway's
cat-black tongue
lashes across
the glistening back
of the tarmac night.

Pie Corbett.

© Pie Corbett, from *The Apple Raid*, Macmillan Pupils' Books.

RESOURCES

Resource Sheet 8 Poetry reading

Extract from 2000 KS2 test for schools in Wales

These questions are about the poem *City Jungle*

26. How is the city described in this poem?

Choose the best group of words and put a ring around your choice.

as a jungle full of friendly creatures	as a silent and scary place	as a place full of dangerous animals	as a noisy but inviting place

26
1 mark

27. *Lizard cars cruise by;*
their radiators grin.

Find and copy two other examples where the poet describes something in the city as if it were an animal.

1. _____

_____

27
2. _____ 2 marks

_____

28. *The gutter gargles.*

In this line, the poet has chosen two words that start with the same letter (alliteration).

Explain why you think the poet chose these words.

_____ 28

_____ 1 mark

_____ Total

29. What does the poem make you think the city is like?

Explain your answer as fully as you can, referring to the poem.

29

3 marks

RESOURCES

Resource Sheet 9 Poetry mark scheme

SECTION 3 – *City Jungle*

26. **Multiple-choice questions**
Focus of question: overview of theme

1 mark

How is the city described in this poem?

Choose the best group of words and put a ring around your choice.

as a jungle full of friendly creatures	as a silent and scary place	**as a place full of dangerous animals**	as a noisy but inviting place

27. *Lizard cars cruise by;*
their radiators grin.

Find and copy two other examples where the poet describes something in the city as if it were an animal.

Up to 2 marks

Focus of question: **textual evidence**

Award **1 mark, up to a maximum of 2**, for quotation of any of the following examples:

- *thin headlights stare*
- *shop doorways keep their mouths shut*
- *hunched houses cough*
- *the gutter gargles*
- *a motorbike snarls*
- *dustbins flinch*
- *streetlights bare their yellow teeth*
- *the motorway's cat-black tongue lashes.*

Do not accept:

- *newspapers shuffle by, hands in their pockets.*

28. *The gutter gargles.*

In this line, the poet has chosen two words that start with the same letter (alliteration).

Explain why you think the poet chose these words.

1 mark

Focus of question: **style/authorial devices**

Award **1 mark** for answers that show a recognition that the sound of the repeated *g* in these words suggests a gargling sound; **or** answer that comment on the effectiveness of these two words in combination/suggest that the gargling sound makes the gutter seem like an animal.

For example:

- *because the two gs together sound like a gargling noise*
- *because it is a gutter that gargles like an animal*
- *because when it rains a gutter makes a gargling noise with water dripping down it*
- *when water goes past in a gutter it sounds like somebody is gargling.*

RESOURCES

29. What does the poem make you think the city is like? Explain your answer as fully as you can, referring to the poem.

Up to 3 marks

Focus of question: **personal response**

Award **1 mark** for answers that refer to the city in ways suggested by the poem (i.e. inhospitable), but are not supported by explicit reference to the poem.

For example:

- *it makes the city sound like it's crazy and scary and cold, and probably pretty horrifying*
- *a scary dark dangerous place; somewhere you have to be careful when entering*
- *the poem makes me feel that the city is a scary and spooky place. That all the objects in the city at night are against you.*

Award **2 marks** for answers that give opinions about the city that are supported by some textual reference, and make some connections between the jungle/animal images and the wild, lively impression this gives of the city.

For example:

- *as if the city is alive and the objects are real and they're breathing and they're coming to get us*
- *the poem makes you think that everything in the city is alive. The motorbikes, the dustbins, houses and motorways.*

Award **3 marks** for answers that give opinions about the city that are fully supported by textual reference, and make explicit connections between the jungle images and the wild impression this gives of the city.

For example:

- *I think the city is like a big jungle with the cars and street lights as predators ready to jump out in a frightening way. It makes you think that the city is full of wild living things to scare you, like snarling makes the motorbike seem like a wild beast.*

Resource Sheet 10 Non-fiction writing

Planning sheet – Tried and Tested

Paragraph 1 Introduction
Definition/purpose: (use given opening +)
classmates and I tested – month – overall success – good/bad – hope info of use to improve
Paragraph 2 Materials
Bag canvas
Good
light and strong
Bad
unfashionable, not waterproof ... books got wet
The bag
Paragraph 3 Size of bag
Good
Main compartment – of adequate capacity for daily needs – PE equipment fitted in
Bad
Outer pockets good idea for pencils, stationery – but fiddly, not big enough – some pencil cases wouldn't fit
Paragraph 4 Strength of bag
Good
Bag strong, flexible leather/chrome fasteners easy to open and secure when closed
Webbing straps strong
Bad
Stitching came away at seams by end of month
Straps uncomfortable – padding recommended
Paragraph 5 Ending: advice
Bullets of main points from text
Closing line – enjoyed bag; good design overall; repeat hope advice/info is useful

Extended narrative writing unit

Framework objectives

Text

14. to write an extended story, worked on over time, on a theme identified in reading;

10. to write a brief synopsis of a text, e.g. for back cover blurb;

11. to write a brief helpful review tailored for real audiences.

Sentence

4. to secure control of complex sentences, understanding how clauses can be manipulated to achieve different effects.

Word

1. to identify mis-spelt words in own writing; to keep individual lists (e.g. spelling logs); to learn to spell them;
2. to use known spellings as a basis for spelling other words with similar patterns or related meanings;
3. to use independent spelling strategies, including:
   - building up spelling by syllabic parts, using known prefixes, suffixes and common letter strings;
   - applying knowledge of spelling rules and exceptions;
   - building words from other known words and from awareness of the meaning of derivations of words;
   - using dictionaries and IT spell-checks;
   - using visual skills, e.g. recognising common letter strings and checking critical features (i.e. does it look right? shape, length, etc.).

Length of Unit

3 weeks

Illustrative texts

The Awakening (supplied in this booklet);
Barrowquest (optional) ICT text adventure, incorporating *The Awakening* (downloadable from DfES www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy in Summer Term 2002);
The Great Pyramid Robbery by Katherine Roberts (Chapter 1),
ISBN 0 00 711278 5 (or alternative at teacher's discretion).

Outcomes

- All pupils (in pairs or individually) to write a five-chapter quest story, modelled on *The Awakening*, but with original content.
- These to be incorporated into collaborative group versions of a text adventure (in either paper or computer versions).

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Rationale

This three-week unit involves reading a model 'quest adventure' in five chapters and using this as a basis for developing an extended story through shared and independent writing. Provision is made for the individual stories created to be grouped into collaborative multiple-choice text adventures.

Week 1 places the emphasis on shared, whole-class experience with related independent activity. *Days 1 and 2* engage with the model text and explore its structure. *Day 3* introduces a stimulus for the new story to be written. *Day 4* generates collective ideas and plans the new story in outline. *Day 5* involves the shared writing of a collective opening chapter for the new story based on the ideas and plans of the previous days.

Weeks 2 and 3 largely involve the children working in pairs or individually to draft, write and polish their own versions of the remaining four chapters of the new story, within a framework that allows extensive scope for creativity and imagination. *Day 2 of Week 3* (movable if desired) provides a 'spelling strategy day', as a break from the writing. *Day 5 of Week 3* provides opportunity for the individual stories produced to be combined into group 'adventures', to be shared with others.

Optional ICT files provide a model and template for an ICT version of the multiple-choice adventure and, throughout, suggestions are given for using ICT as the principal reading and writing medium, but the unit is fully workable without any of these.

Note on structuring the Literacy Hour during this unit

As this unit is intended for the later stages of Year 6, and has extended writing as its focus, text, sentence and word level objectives are often threaded through all stages of the hour, rather than being taught discretely. The basic structure is of shared reading or writing leading into independent activity, usually writing, and pulled together again for a plenary. On some days the shared work is extended, but on others it is foreshortened, and independent work extended to allow more time for paired and individual writing.

It is intended that guided reading will continue as normal alongside the unit. The objectives of this may or may not relate to the rest of the unit, at the teacher's discretion, and it is not covered in the planning which follows.

Using ICT

In the Summer Term, electronic files to complement work on the *Barrowquest* extended story unit will be available to download from (www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/literacy). These are designed for easy use on both PC and Macintosh computers and will comprise:

- a file containing the full *Barrowquest* multiple-choice text adventure, of which *The Awakening* is one strand (see Flowchart on page 54).
- a file containing an empty 'template' of the *Barrowquest* multiple-choice adventure, into which text created by individual pupils or pairs of pupils can easily be loaded to make a collective class or group story (see Flowchart on page 64).

Using the above files (or others devised by teachers), ICT can be used to support both reading and writing elements of this unit.

For shared reading and writing some mechanism for making the computer output visible to the whole class, such as a large monitor, a data projector or access to a networked computer suite, will be needed. Extensive advice on using ICT for whole-class teaching is available on the BECTA website, and on the NLS CD-ROM: *ICT in the Literacy Hour* (sent to all primary schools in September 2001 – further copies available from DfES publications, tel. 0845 60222 60: ref. 0620/2001).

To use ICT for the independent writing, each child (or pair) will need access to a computer at the appropriate times, be this within a suite or elsewhere.

A possible compromise, if hardware access is limited, might be to use ICT for the shared (whole-class) elements of the unit, for example via a data projector whilst using paper for children's independent work.

The use of the electronic files, or any ICT component, is not essential to this extended writing unit, which can be fully worked using paper-based resources only. However the electronic files are strongly recommended, and will add a most valuable dimension to this unit.

Before starting the unit it is advisable (but not essential) to download the full *Barrowquest* text adventure, and spend some time outside the Literacy Hour exploring this with your class. This is best done on screen, where possible, but the full text could be printed off, if preferred. *Barrowquest* is a deliberately simplified text adventure that can be used as a model and framework for the extended writing in this unit. It has a five-chapter structure with four choices for each chapter after the first – see Flowchart on page 54. In this preliminary encounter, children need to explore the basic idea that a choice at the end of each chapter determines what will happen next, giving multiple routes through the story.

Year 6 Term 3 – Extended narrative writing unit

Day 1	**Shared reading and writing** (30–35 mins) In an extended shared reading session, engage fully with the five short chapters of *The Awakening*. If using ICT, generate this from the *Barrowquest* file, deliberately choosing the correct options for each subsequent chapter (see Flowchart on page 54). If not using ICT, use the paper text and/or OHTs provided. Allow children to reflect, discuss and question.	**Independent/guided work** (15–20 mins) Ask the children, in pairs or groups, to identify the main story elements of each chapter. Then, from this, ask them to explore the basic structure of the story as it progresses over the course of the five chapters, and to find some graphic way of representing this ('excitement graph').	**Plenary** (10 mins) Take feedback and, through shared discussion and writing, compile a composite representation of the story structure over five chapters. (Draw on *Teacher Notes: Story Structure* as appropriate.)
Day 2	**Shared reading and writing** (30–35 mins) In a further extended session, first recap on the structure discussed the previous day. Refine this where appropriate. (The end product should bear some resemblance to the chapter boxes on the Planning Frame – but do not actually introduce this at this stage). Then discuss the whole idea of a quest story, as relates to *The Awakening*, and ask the children for other examples from their previous experience. Through discussion (using *The Awakening* as the main example, but drawing on other examples the children know as well) compile a list of the main features of a quest story. (See the first section of *Teacher Notes: Story Structure*). Introduce the key questions from the first section of the *Planning Framework*, and discuss their relevance to all quest stories.	**Independent/guided work** (15–20 mins) Briefly remind children of the purpose and nature of a story synopsis, as found in the blurb and elsewhere. Ask them to write a synopsis of the whole story, as might be used to tempt a child of similar age to read it. Suggest that the synopsis should provide answers to some (or all?) of the key questions discussed above – without necessarily giving the ending away! Write, revise and improve in pairs or groups.	**Plenary** (10 mins) Share some of the synopses. Compare, discuss and evaluate in terms of effectiveness for purpose. How could they be improved?
Day 3	**Shared reading and writing** (30–35 mins) In a further extended shared reading session, read and discuss Chapter 1 of *The Great Pyramid Robbery* (or any other story of your choosing which may be used to stimulate the writing of a new story following the model of *The Awakening*). Allow reflection, discussion and questioning. Then recap the key questions from the first section of the *Planning Framework*. Suggest that you are going to write a quest story, modelled on *The Awakening*, and drawing ideas from what you have read of *The Great Pyramid Robbery*. Begin to discuss what the answers to some of the key questions might be for your new story.	**Independent/guided work** (15–20 mins) Ask the children in pairs or groups to continue discussing ideas for possible answers to the key questions, and then to record these. Include the generation of ideas for some 'adventures' within the new quest.	**Plenary** (10 mins) Take feedback and build up an agreed collective response to the key questions, as the first stage in planning the new story. (NB: if later writing from individuals and pairs is eventually going to be fed into a group or class adventure, it is necessary to agree on a common set of answers to the key questions at this stage.) Record and save.
Day 4	**Shared reading and writing** (30–35 mins) Introduce the class to the idea of writing a shared quest adventure. Look at and explain the overall idea of children writing their own versions of chapters and then feeding these into a template to form part of a collective outcome. Use Flowchart on page 64 if necessary. (If using ICT you can explain how this mirrors the structure of the *Barrowquest* adventure they have already seen.) Divide the class into an appropriate number of groups of writers. (It is recommended that children write in pairs, but work could be individual if teachers prefer. A mixture of pairs and individuals may be necessary in order to produce the correct number of versions in some classes. See *Class Grouping Chart*.) Introduce the full planning/writing frame, and discuss fully, placing particular emphasis on the need for each chapter to end in the agreed way if the end product is to be fitted together.	**Independent/guided work** (15–20 mins) Recap the agreed answers to the key questions. Ask each writing unit (pair or individual) to begin to sketch out ideas for each chapter, using the frame and drawing on the agreed answers to the key questions.	**Plenary** (10 mins) Take feedback on some of the preliminary ideas, and discuss. Recap on the basic structure of the five-chapter story, as explored on Days 1 and 2.
Day 5	**Shared reading and writing and Independent work** (50 mins) Demonstrate the writing of Chapter 1, with extensive interactivity and discussion, and incorporating elements of teacher scribing and supported composition. An annotated example of such a first chapter, leading on from the suggested stimulus, *The Great Pyramid Robbery*, is provided for reference on page 54, if required. This will need to be adapted to draw upon ideas generated through interaction in the previous sessions and to provide a starting point from which different versions of the subsequent four chapters will follow. Whilst writing, continually verbalise the composition process and refer constantly to the work on structure and planning already done. Incorporate some consideration of complex sentences to address the appropriate objective. At various points during the shared writings, ask children to discuss in pairs and/or write on white boards, what they think the next few words/sentences or next paragraph might be. Provide both 'two-minute' and more extended talking/writing opportunities. Include some practice in writing effective complex sentences. Take feedback, and incorporate suggestions into demonstration.		**Plenary** (10 mins) Re-read the chapter just written as shared reading. Discuss, amend and improve as appropriate.

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Week 2

	Shared reading and writing (15–20 mins)	Independent/guided work (30–35 mins)	Plenary (10 mins)
Day 1	Recap agreed answers to key questions. Briefly re-read Chapter 1 as written on the previous day. Recap work on structure and planning of overall story, and of Chapter 2 in particular, referring to the frame and remembering where the chapter about to be written fits into the whole. Allocate one of the chapter opening choices (e.g. He goes NORTH/SOUTH/EAST/WEST) to each of the four pairs/individuals within each group.	Ask pairs or individuals as organised to write their own version of Chapter 2, following the frame, but totally free to invent their own content within this. Suggest working through a writing process that includes reviewing and possibly extending their earlier planning, drafting the chapter and revising as appropriate. Alongside writing they should be asked to compile their own log of spellings of which they are unsure, together with the correct version of each. (If children are working with ICT this can be greatly facilitated by using the spell-check.) Point out that they will also have the next day to complete this writing process for Chapter 2.	Take feedback on writing so far, and discuss developmentally as appropriate.
Day 2	As for Day 1, aiming to complete the writing of Chapter 2. (Discuss length and refer to original model.)	If using ICT, the completed file needs to be carefully saved with the writer's name and an appropriate coding (see flowchart on page 64), so that it can later be loaded into the *Barrowquest* template.	
Day 3	As for Day 1, but with Chapter 3		
Day 4	As for Day 2, but with Chapter 3		
Day 5	As for Day 1, but with Chapter 4		

Week 3

	Shared reading and writing (15–20 mins)	Independent/guided work (30–35 mins)	Plenary (10 mins)
Day 1	As for Day 2 of Week 2 , but with Chapter 4		
Day 2	Recap and discuss main strategies for spelling (see objective W3, and refer back to NLS training material if necessary). Play some interactive games to reinforce this.	Ask children, in pairs or groups, to work on the spelling logs compiled over the last six days, classify the mistakes made, according to the appropriate strategies, and suggest ways of remembering the correct spelling in future. Test each other, etc.	Share the strategies suggested for remembering specific spellings, and draw out some generalisations.
Day 3	As for Day 1 of Week 2, but with Chapter 5		
Day 4	As for Day 2 of Week 2, but with Chapter 5		
Before Day 5: For each writing group, compile Chapter 1 from shared writing together with the four pair/individual versions of each of Chapters 2-5 into a composite 'text adventure'. • If using ICT this can very easily be done by inserting each saved file into the appropriate place in the *Barrowquest* template file. • If using paper, the chapters can still be compiled into a group outcome, following the schema on page 64, but pages will need to be numbered and 'Turn to page XX' worked out and added for each end-of-chapter choice. If easier, this compilation process could be done gradually as versions of each chapter are produced.			
Day 5	Use an example of the compiled adventure from one group as a basis for shared reading and discussion. (Time allowing, activity from Day 5 could well be extended into further literacy, or related cross-curricular work, inside or outside the Literacy Hour).	Allow each group time to explore their own compiled adventure. Then ask each individual within the group to write a short review of their adventure, which would tempt other children (Year 5?) to read and enjoy it.	Share and discuss some of the reviews, and plan how the completed adventures could be shared with others. (If using ICT, via e-mail or the Internet.)

RESOURCES

1. The Barrow

Lin pushed himself between the massive slabs. The huge weight of stone pressed in on him, and a greater weight of terror squeezed him more. Without lubrication from the ancient growth of moss that coated the stones he might never have made it through the narrow gap at all. I can't do this, he thought. Why me? If I were younger or larger I wouldn't be here.

"Let's call him Lin for short," a boy in the tribe once mocked, "for short is what he is." The rest had laughed. Lin he had become, and short he had stayed and skinny too. And that was precisely why the chieftain Magh had called him to the tribefire, to the council where no boys came.

"Your tribe has need of you," said Magh, "great need. Sit here and listen well."

"But . . " blurted Lin.

"Sit, boy." Magh gave no choice, accepted no hesitation. Then he spoke, slowly and solemnly, in the deep, resonant voice that had awed Lin all his life. "Our tribe is in great peril. Even now as we sit by our own tribefire, hordes of our darkest, ancient foes are encamped around our borders. Vast hordes. Soon they will attack. And when they do, great as we have been, great as we are, we have not might enough to drive them off. For all time remembered, and much forgotten, our tribe have peopled this land, moulded its stories – but soon all this, all that we know and value will end in loss, in darkness and in death. It will end, that is, unless someone can find the magician and wake him." Magh paused and looked around slowly.

"Our old ones say that under Barrow Hill there sleeps a great magician. His magic saved our people in the distant past. Now he waits, deep in enchanted sleep, guarded by

the warriors of a ghostly king. But in our hour of need he will awake and save us once again. That hour is now." Another pause.

"They say too that there is a way into the hill through the long barrow of our ancestors which stands atop. A way for one who can find it – and take it. But the great stones are immovable, the gap between them narrow, and the way beyond that . . . . Who knows?"

Now Magh looked straight at Lin. "Only you, Lin, are old enough to understand this task, yet small enough to squeeze between the stones. Will you go for us? Will you take this quest? Will you find the magician and wake him?"

"Do I have a choice?" asked Lin.

"Yes, and no," said Magh. "I offer you a choice, but know that you have none."

Lin understood. And now here he was, crawling into the ancient barrow, where no living flesh should be. The stone was deathly cold. Lin's heart was colder still, and the chamber, deep inside the barrow, where he fell with a dull thud, was full of the darkest darkness he had ever known.

He lay for a moment wheezing, gasping for the breath the stones had squeezed from him. Then, as his breathing eased, he pulled out the lamp and flint he had been given and, shivering, lit the flame. By its flickering light he could see four stone passageways leading north, south, east and west out of the chamber. Which should he take? Terror almost froze him, but not quite. He did the only thing he felt he could. He walked straight ahead in the direction he was facing.

<Did he go NORTH, SOUTH, EAST or WEST? >
<SOUTH chosen.>

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OHT 2

RESOURCES

2. The Amazing Roots

For some way the passage to the south ran level, but then it began to drop and curve back upon itself. As Lin walked he spiralled down and down and down, until he felt he had reached the heart of the earth itself.

He found himself in a vast underground chamber. Its huge space was filled with what he took at first to be pillars, arches, twisted beams. These in turn seemed to be slung about with ropes, ropes looped and dangling, ropes twisted and entwined, many with frayed ends that lost themselves in mists of fibre. But as he explored, as he looked and felt and smelled, he found that they were all roots. He was standing in an enormous cavern, grown through by the tangled roots of a great tree – a tree that must be almost half the size of the world.

Intrigued, Lin began to wander amongst the roots. He swung past them and ducked under them. He climbed over them and pushed through their fantastic forms. Soon he lost all sense of where he had come from, and had no idea which way he was going. Then he realised that, worst of all, he had no idea which way he should go. He was lost in a vast knot of roots, which soared above him and surrounded him on all sides.

He set off with a will in the direction he was already facing. But he soon found the line impossible to hold. He had to duck and twist and veer, until his mind was more tangled than the roots. He wandered on through the maze of turns and dead ends until he began to think his own dead end would be there too.

Then he began to see faces in the twisted forms of gnarled wood that surrounded him. He saw heads without bodies leering at him from every direction, laughing at his desperation. He saw contorted, woody faces everywhere, all the same, all laughing. Their noses were twists of root. Their hair and eyebrows were tangles of frond. Their laughing mouths were puckered knots. Faces. Faces. All laughing. All mocking him. All the same.

No, not all the same. That one had a hooked nose. That one had a stubby ear. That one had much larger eyes. That one looked old and tired.

Lin began to see the difference, the uniqueness, in each face. And as he did so the mockery on the faces seemed to change to friendlier laughter. Twisted mouths warmed into smiles.

Once he felt he knew each one, Lin gave each face a name. You look like a "Crab" to me, he thought, because you are old and crabby. You look like a "Hog" because your hair sticks out like spines. You look like a "Merry". There are laughter lines around your eyes.

"Thank you, Lin," said Hog. "I've never had a name before. If you turn right here and duck under that big root you'll come to Burr. He'll tell you where to go next."

"No problem," said Burr, when Lin reached him. And, one by one, the faces with names directed Lin through the maze of roots, until he came to the far end of the chamber. There he found four doors. One was made of oak, one of ash, one of elm and one of thorn wood. He opened the nearest and walked through.

<Did Lin choose the OAK, ASH, ELM or THORN door? > <THORN chosen.>

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RESOURCES

3.The Great Bear

The heavy, thorn door slammed shut again behind him. It had no handle on Lin's side and there was no way back. He leaned against it to gather himself, take stock. It felt solid and safe behind him.

But there was nothing safe in what Lin saw before him – nothing safe at all. His heart jumped and then raced. He took in a sharp breath. The urge to flee surged through him, and in panic he turned again to scrabble at the door. No handle. No escape. He knew that. Was there another way out? Somewhere to hide?

There was nowhere.

He was in a sort of dungeon, a large square space without windows or doors, except for the door behind him. Floor, walls, ceiling seemed to be of solid rock. There was a dim half-light, but where it came from Lin could not tell. More than anything there was a smell. A strong, rank, animal smell that made him almost gag. Near the centre of the room was a wooden chest, and, near that, the source of the smell, the source of Lin's terror, the nightmare he wished to flee, but couldn't.

Filling half the middle of the room was a huge pile of shaggy, matted fur, soaked in patches with something black and noxious – sweat or blood? From near one end, black eyes glared at Lin with a fierce hate. As the boy stood, transfixed, the vast mound heaved onto enormous feet, feet with claws like filed daggers, scraping and gouging the floor. It lurched towards him. It opened monstrous jaws. A dark red chasm of mouth gaped. A black tongue lolled. Vicious, yellowed teeth parted and saliva dribbled like pus. Then a noise from the end of the earth hit Lin like a blow and he gagged again at a blast of sweet and foetid breath.

It was the most enormous, the most terrible bear, a creature of pure nightmare.

The bear lurched at Lin again, and the dark hatred of its eyes burned into him. Its jaws crunched. Its great paws slashed, inches from Lin's face. He flattened himself against the door. Then he saw that the bear was chained to an iron ring in the floor. The chain stopped the creature from reaching Lin – just. It left only inches of space against the door as any sort of refuge. But it gave him the chance to find his breath, to find himself again.

Then Lin looked back into the fierce eyes of the bear. He looked with a gaze that was straight and strong. He looked into the greatest hatred and anger he had ever seen. But he looked beyond that too. And beyond the bear's rage he saw a landscape of snow. He saw men with spears. He saw the body of a bear cub, slung by its feet from wooden poles and carried off in triumph. He saw another cub, its body gashed open, its fur ripped away. He saw bear blood on snow. And then he understood the bear's rage. He understood its sorrow, its despair.

So Lin spoke to the bear, in a voice that was full of grief, and understanding. He spoke of loss and death and snow. He shared the bear's pain and, as he spoke, the great bear calmed, settled, lay down. And when the boy and bear had wept inside together, the bear slept.

Lin went over to the chest and opened it. Inside were musical instruments, a harp, a flute, a tambour and a lute. He picked one up and played it, gently, to the sleeping bear.

<Did he play the HARP, FLUTE, TAMBOUR or LUTE?
<HARP chosen.>

RESOURCES

4. The Island of Glass

As Lin played the harp he felt himself transported on a wave of magical sound. Light spiralled and flamed around him. A river of patterns swirled. Time and the world turned, and Lin melted through them until he found himself on a stony shore at the edge of a vast, dark lake. Behind him cliffs soared, solid and sheer as far as he could see, and further, into a great darkness where the sky should have been. That is why the water looks so black, he thought. There is no sky here to reflect in it.

Yet there was light of a kind – a pale, hard light that skimmed the dark surface like a thrown stone, without sinking in. The light came from an island far out in the middle of the lake. The island itself was beaming out the cold, sharp rays. It was made entirely of glass.

Lin turned to the cliff. It held one small rocky shelf where he placed the instrument. It seemed to belong there and began to play itself, almost inaudibly. But Lin did not belong. There was water in front of him, rock behind, and only a small space of shingle between the two. He did the only thing he thought he could. He turned and walked with the cliff on his right hand, the water on his left, along the narrow shore. He walked for what seemed hours, days, always the cliff to his right, the lake to his left, unchanging. At last he heard the faintest hint of music ahead. He hastened towards it and found the instrument on its rocky shelf, exactly as he had left it. He was back where he had started.

He sat on the shore exhausted, gazing towards the island of glass. The island! That was the way to go. Could he swim so far? He rose and stepped towards the water's edge, then into its icy darkness. No sooner had he broken the surface than the water foamed and

churned. The slimy tentacles of some unspeakable thing snaked out towards him, reached for him, grabbed at him, drove him, stumbling, back against the cliff.

He stood and stared at the island, close to despair. Was there no way off this shore? He needed a boat, but there was no boat – only cliff and shore and terrible water. He imagined the boat he needed. He could picture it in his mind. He could see its grooved planking. He could see its curving prow. He could smell the good wood, and feel its roughness. He could hear the water lapping against its sides. He could feel the gravel scrunch as he edged the boat away from the shore. He stepped into it and pushed off. The boat was floating now out into the lake. Again the water stirred and bubbled, but this time no tentacles appeared, only a human arm rising from the depths. Its hand held a long, plain staff of wood. It offered up the staff and Lin reached out to take it. He stood then in the middle of the boat holding the staff high and horizontal in front of him. He imagined himself a mast. He imagined a sail. He imagined a wind that drove him steadily to the shore of the glass island.

Lin stepped from the boat onto the island still carrying the staff. As he stepped, the staff struck the glass. It struck with a crack that echoed around the island, and a spectrum of light shot from the glass, splitting into intense beams. Rainbow bridges of light vaulted out from the island across the dark water. Bridges of blue, green, indigo and violet light solidified in front of Lin, and he stepped resolutely onto one of them.

<Did he use the BLUE, GREEN, INDIGO or VIOLET bridge? > <INDIGO chosen.>

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5.The Magician

As Lin stepped off the indigo bridge it faded into darkness behind him. He found himself in a vast, pillared hall, lit by flickering torches. In the shadows lurked warriors in full battle gear, chain coats, iron helmets, iron shields. Lin stood transfixed. More and more warriors appeared. They advanced on him with a menacing, rhythmic clank. Rank upon rank they rolled towards him, like the waves of a metal sea. And as they came they drew weapons and held them aloft to threaten him, swords, axes, maces. Clank. Clank. Bearing down. Encroaching. Enclosing. Clank. Clank. Clank.

In panic Lin lifted the staff he was carrying to try to defend himself, a futile weapon against armour and swords. Yet, suddenly, the warriors gave way, parted ranks. Between them strode forward a king, crowned and with one hand of shining silver.

"Who is it that you seek?" asked the king.

"The magician," said Lin, "the one who sleeps."

The warriors parted further and the king pointed with his silver hand to a curtain covering what must be a doorway. The curtain was woven with a strange spiral pattern. Lin approached and cautiously pulled it aside. Beyond was a small chamber completely walled with mirrors. But inside the chamber there was nothing, nothing at all.

"There's no-one in there," said Lin despairingly. "I've come all this way, and the sleeping magician has gone."

But still the king pointed beyond the curtain, into the chamber.

"Enter, boy. You will find the magician."

Unsure, Lin looked at him. He looked deep into the king's eyes and found there truth, and a promise. He followed the unwavering arm, the resolutely pointing hand. He walked slowly past the spiralled curtain and into the chamber. Then he stopped. He stared. He saw himself, himself from every side. Multiple mirrored images of Lin stared back at him. In every hand of every Lin he saw the staff he still held. And every staff in every hand glowed with the light of magical power.

He turned then, and left the chamber. He found himself no longer in the hall of the warriors, but back at the centre of the barrow. Great slabs of ancient stone surrounded him again on every side. A voice from the tribe outside found its echoing way through some unseen gap.

"Are you there, Lin? Did you find the magician? Did you wake him?"

"Yes," said Lin. "I think I did."

He raised the staff, his staff. The stone around him dissolved away. He stood on a rounded hilltop, all the folk of his own tribe clustered before him. Then he lifted his staff higher still and magic burst from its tip like light streaming from a star. Lin's magic streamed to the eastern horizon, where it danced with the fire of a flaming dawn. It streamed to the far, far north where it kissed the misty air of mountains. It streamed to the south where it enfolded the resinous dark of a wild forest. It streamed to the west where it glinted off the dancing waves of the distant sea.

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Barrowquest: model ICT text adventure

Basic structure showing position of model story *The Awakening*

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BARROWQUEST: The Awakening

Teacher Notes – Story Structure

Story type

This story is in the tradition of 'quest' adventures. The core structure of a ***quest*** involves a ***hero*** who goes off on a journey in a strange/distant/dangerous ***location*** with the aim of finding a ***treasure***, encountering many adventures on the way. These ***adventures*** often involve the vanquishing of dangerous ***enemies***, the completion of ***tasks*** and the solving of ***puzzles***. Of course there are many possible variations on this basic idea. The hero can be of either gender, and is sometimes joined by ***companions***, at least for part of the journey. The world of the quest is often a magical one, but the object of the quest, the treasure, need not be simple. Often various minor treasures have to be gathered before the final quest is achieved, and indeed the treasure need not be material at all. Sometimes the object of a quest can be to discover what the object of the quest actually is. Sometimes the treasure, when finally found, is not exactly what it was originally thought to be, and, often, the outcome of the quest involves the acquisition of wisdom or self-knowledge on the part of the hero.

The ***quest*** is a very old story form. It is often found in mythology, as in Jason's *Quest for the Golden Fleece*. A significant part of the King Arthur legend is the *Quest for the Holy Grail*. The quest forms the basis for much 'fantasy' fiction, and both *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* are good examples. Quest adventures are common in children's fiction too. There are elements of the quest in *Harry Potter* (e.g. the Triwizard Tournament in *Goblet of Fire*), but a much clearer example is Peter Dickinson's recent *The Ropemaker*. One of the very first computer games was a quest-type text adventure, simply called *Adventure*, and, in recent years the quest has been widely adopted as a narrative framework by writers of other computer games.

Overall structure

The Awakening is written so that it can form part of *Barrowquest*, a complete multiple-choice computer text adventure. However, as a stand-alone, it also forms a cohesive, five-chapter story of the ***quest*** type, and as such can be used as the basic shared/text model for this extended story unit.

Clearly Chapter 1 constitutes an *introduction* of the basic character and situation, establishing the ***hero*** and the nature of the ***quest***.

Chapter 5 provides the *climax* and *resolution* of the story, with the ***hero*** facing the final ***enemy***, and discovering the ***treasure***.

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 are each to some extent autonomous, and each describes a separate ***adventure***, in a separate ***location***, on the way to achievement of the ***quest***. However, they do also contribute to the overall structure of the story, with Chapter 2

building up tension and excitement from Chapter 1, and Chapter 3 then continuing to build to a first 'preliminary climax' (when the *hero* faces the first real *monster*) whilst still leaving scope for the main climax later. Chapter 4 represents something of a deliberate drop in the excitement graph of the story (whilst still winding up the tension) in order to prepare for and add to the impact of the final climax in Chapter 5.

Thus the main chapter pattern of the story is:
1. INTRO / GRIP
2. BUILD
3. BUILD MORE
4. EASE OFF (a little, but not altogether!)
5. BUILD EVEN MORE and then ROUND OFF.

Additionally, each chapter also carries a role in the overall theme and intention of the story. The aim of the quest is to find the magician, so in each chapter the hero learns a little more of where (and who) the magician is. Hopefully, the reader too is given increasing hints in each chapter as to the magician's identity, but without coming to a full realisation until Chapter 5.

The story also gains 'resonance' with other stories, myths and legends, by the deliberate use of references (names, images and incidents) from a wide variety of traditional sources – a technique widely used by J K Rowling, J R R Tolkien and many others. These references do not necessarily need to be picked up for the reader to understand the story, but they do add to its magical 'feel' and to its resonance with 'universal myth'.

Chapter 1

Here the reader is introduced to the *hero*, and the reason for, purpose of, and *location* of the *quest* are established. Structurally this is done by 'starting-at-the-exciting-bit' (where Lin enters the barrow), and then recapping to explain what has led up to this. Most of the information needed by the reader is conveyed within the story itself through the device of the chieftain explaining things to Lin and his council. The end of the chapter then picks up again from the beginning and leads into the action.

Note
The story of the 'sleeper under the hill' (sometimes held to be the magician Merlin, sometimes King Arthur himself) is widely found in Celtic and other legends and is drawn upon extensively by Alan Garner in *The Weirdstone of Brisingamen*.

Chapters 2, 3 and 4

Each of these has to start and finish at a given point, in order to fit in with the overall Barrowquest requirements. However, these chapters develop individual, semi-separate adventures (each a particular problem – task, challenge or puzzle – and its resolution), within the overall structural framework described above. In Chapter 4 a 'key' object (the wooden staff) is found which will play a significant part in the final chapter. The most important thing is the part each plays in the 'excitement' graph of the story as a whole, and the contribution each makes to the overall achievement of the quest.

Notes

- In Chapter 2, the great tree, or 'tree of life', is found in many mythologies. The maze or labyrinth is a feature of many quests (e.g. *Theseus and the Minotaur*), and is frequently a basis for all or part of computer games.
- In Chapter 3, the great bear features in myth and in cosmology. Children who know Charles Causley's poem *The Dancing Bear* (See Term 2 Unit 1) may well pick up echoes here, and there are reminders too of Fluffy in *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, himself, of course, an echo of the Greek Cerberus.
- In Chapter 4, the Island of Glass (*Ynis Witryn* in Welsh) is an early name for Glastonbury, believed to be Arthur's Avalon, and the Arthurian legend is also echoed in the arm rising from the lake. The rainbow bridge, in contrast, is associated with the entry of the Norse gods into Valhalla.

Chapter 5

Meeting (and in some way defeating) the last and greatest ***enemy***, the guardian of the treasure, and finding the ***treasure*** itself, is the traditional climactic element (final level) of the quest, and provides the basic structure for this final chapter. The 'key' object (the staff) found in Chapter 4 plays a significant part in this.

The journey home is then often also a feature of longer quest stories, but is quickly dealt with here. (Magic can be a very convenient story device at times – but also an over-convenient one at others!)

The ending is left deliberately open, but perhaps not as open as it first appears. The celebration of Lin's newfound magic carries with it the clear implication that he is now in a position to help his tribe. Although after his experiences in the barrow this will perhaps not be in quite the way they expect!

Notes

King Nuada of the Silver Hand is a figure from Celtic mythology. The spiral on the curtain is a Celtic symbol of death and rebirth, and its presence here, when Lin is 'reborn' as a magician, is the balancing point of his earlier spiral descent into the earth.

RESOURCES

Barrowquest Adventure Planning Framework

KEY QUESTIONS. Before starting, decide:

- Why is the quest necessary?
- What is the object of the quest? (Treasure? Real treasure? An object, a person or an idea?)
- What is the location for the quest? (Remember that within the magical world of the quest it may be possible to visit many times and places – but something needs to pull them all together and keep the story whole.)
- Who is the hero? (Male or female? Why is (s)he chosen? Will (s)he have companions?)
- What sort of adventures might (s)he have on the way? (And how will they contribute to the quest?)
- What 'key' object is found in Chapter 4 and plays a significant role in Chapter 5? (e.g. the wooden staff in The *Awakening*.)
- Will the hero succeed in the quest? (And what will the consequence of that be?)

In Chapter 1

Introduce the hero.
Explain the purpose of the quest.
Explain the object of the quest.
Introduce the location for the quest.
Set things up for the action to start.

(What devices can you use to do all this in a way which will grip the reader?)

End with a choice of four passages: NORTH, SOUTH, EAST or WEST.

In Chapter 2

Tell the first adventure.

Start with a passage: NORTH, SOUTH, EAST or WEST.

Introduce a problem (task? puzzle? challenge? enemy?) and then resolve it.
Make it exciting, but leave room to add more in the next chapter.
Show how the adventure helps the hero in the quest.

(What devices can you use to establish mood and atmosphere? Build excitement?)

End with a choice of four doors: OAK, ASH, ELM or THORN.

RESOURCES

In Chapter 3

Tell the second adventure.

Start with a door: OAK, ASH, ELM or THORN.

Introduce a problem (task? puzzle? challenge? enemy?) and then resolve it.
Make it a contrast to the one in Chapter 2.
Build the excitement higher than in Chapter 2, but still leave room for even more in the last chapter.

Show how the adventure helps the hero in the quest.

(What devices can you use to contrast with the last adventure, and build even more excitement?)

End with choosing a musical instrument: HARP, FLUTE, TAMBOUR or LUTE.

In Chapter 4

Tell the third adventure.

Start with the playing of a musical instrument: HARP, FLUTE, TAMBOUR or LUTE.

Introduce a problem (task? puzzle? challenge? enemy?) and then resolve it.
Make it a contrast to the earlier ones.
Calm the excitement a bit, so that you can build to the big climax in the last chapter, but still 'wind up the tension'.
Find the 'key' object (e.g. the staff in *The Awakening*).
Show how the adventure helps the hero in the quest.

(What devices can you use to wind up the tension and lead towards the climax in the last chapter?)

[You could add more chapters between here and the last if you wanted.]

End with choosing a bridge: BLUE, GREEN, INDIGO or VIOLET.

In Chapter 5

Start with the crossing of a bridge: BLUE, GREEN, INDIGO or VIOLET.

Build to a final climax.
Introduce the guardian of the treasure.
Have the hero pass or defeat it.
Show the significance of the 'key' object (e.g. the staff in *The Awakening*).
Tell of finding of the treasure (whatever it may be).
Tell of the return home, and what happens there.

(How can you build to a really exciting climax? What devices can you use to end the story, and pull all that has happened together?)

Example of teacher demonstration text for shared writing.
Draws on Chapter 1 of *The Awakening* as a model and follows from stimulus reading of Chapter 1 of *The Great Pyramid Robbery*. (NB example only. Will need adapting in the light of story choices made and children's ongoing contributions.)

Text level	Chapter 1 of *our* new story	Sentence / Word level
Dramatic opening to grab reader. Also establishes main character (quest hero), and initial situation, whilst posing as many questions as it answers.	Slowly, painfully, Neffi opened her eyes. At least she thought she opened them. As everything remained pitch black it was hard to tell. The back of her head hurt terribly and, when she gingerly touched it with a hand, it was warm and slimy. She felt sick. She was frightened too, more frightened than she ever remembered being in her life. Neffi had no idea where she was or how long she had been there. She was hurt. She was scared. She was alone.	Examples of complex sentences for discussion (underlined). What is their effect?
Drops tension slightly, to 'ease' reader further in. Introduces secondary character (ka), and establishes 'magical' ethos. Also develops main character through the relationship.	No that wasn't quite true, thank goodness. She wasn't alone. Thoughts of her ka flooded her mind, and she sensed Jade's spirit form beside her. A feeling of warmth and longing flooded through Neffi, and, just as she had many times through her childhood, she wanted to throw her arms around Jade and cry. She knew it wasn't possible. You couldn't touch a ka, not even your own. She felt better all the same. Then she remembered the ka light. Jade was a spirit. She could make her own light. 'Jade,' whispered Neffi, 'I know you are there. I can sense you but I can't see you. I can't see anything. Can you make ka light for us?' *'Of course,' the ka whispered back, and a thin greenish glow began to radiate from her body, illuminating both her own vague form, and a little of the space around.*	Contrasting short sentences
Establishes location for quest (setting), and rebuilds tension.	Now Neffi could see that she was in a small chamber, every wall of which was covered, floor to roof, with magnificent paintings. There were gods and goddesses, pharaohs and animals, scarabs and serpents, ankhs and palms. Seeing them did not make her less frightened. They terrified her more. She knew now where she was. She had never seen this place before. No one had except those who built it. But she had heard it described by the priests. She was inside the pyramid, the great tomb of an ancient Pharaoh, Khufu.	Adverbs used to create mood and atmosphere
Uses flashback to fill in background of events that have led up to this point. Builds tension further. Makes reader want to know what the paper says.	Gradually she remembered. She had been sitting working at her glyphs, trying to pass her test and become a scribe, when she had dozed in the hot sun. She had been woken by a grim dwarf who had seized her and, thrusting a scroll of papyrus into her belt, wrapped a thick bandage over her eyes. He had carried her a long way and then dropped her down some sort of deep shaft. As she was falling she had heard a heavy stone grate into place above her. Then she was aware of nothing more – until now. Near panic she scrabbled at her belt. The papyrus was still there and she unrolled it. 'Come nearer, Jade, so that I can use your ka light to read by.'	List deliberately used without final linking 'and', to create feeling of going on and on
Establishes the nature and object of the quest (the 'treasure'), and explains the motivation of the hero to undertake it.	In the green glow she managed to decipher the glyphs. AT THE CENTRE OF THE TOMB SLEEPS THE PHARAOH. BEWARE HIS KA. AROUND THE NECK OF THE PHARAOH HANGS A GOLDEN ANKH. IT IS THE KEY OF LIFE. IT IS ALSO THE KEY TO THE TOMB. THERE IS NO OTHER WAY OUT. BRING US THE KEY OR DIE.	
Leads into next chapter. Also further develops character.	She looked around again. The chamber she was in had four downward-sloping exits to north, south, east and west. 'Come on then, Jade.' Her voice was hoarse but her determination was strong. 'We had better find this key.'	Specific vocabulary used to help established setting and mood

< Did she go NORTH, SOUTH, EAST or WEST? >

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Barrowquest: text adventure class writing project

Possible group organisation into writing pairs and individuals, by number in class.

Class Size	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
16	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2			
17	2.2.2.2	2.1.1.1.	1.1.1.1		
18	2.2.2.2	2.2.1.1	1.1.1.1		
19	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.1	1.1.1.1		
20	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	1.1.1.1		
21	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.1.1.1		
22	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.1.1		
23	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.1		
24	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2		
25	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.1.1.1	1.1.1.1	
26	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.1.1	1.1.1.1	
27	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.1	1.1.1.1	
28	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	1.1.1.1	
29	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.1.1.1	
30	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.1.1	
31	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.1	
32	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	
33	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.1.1.1	1.1.1.1
34	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.1.1	1.1.1.1
35	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.1	1.1.1.1
36	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	1.1.1.1
37	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.1.1.1
38	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.1.1
39	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.1
40	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2	2.2.2.2

2 = pair of children who will write one version of each chapter collaboratively

1 = individual child who will write one version of each chapter alone

E.g. *in a class of 30 children:*

Group 1 consists of four pairs of children,
Group 2 consists of four pairs of children,
Group 3 consists of four pairs of children,

Each pair will write a different version of each chapter.

Group 4 consists of two pairs of children and two children working individually. The two pairs each write a different version of each chapter, as does each of the individual children.

Thus, each writing group will produce a different composite 'text adventure' with four versions of each chapter.

This keeps the main emphasis on paired working whilst enabling each group to generate four different versions of each chapter (see flowchart of basic structure on page 64).

Many other groupings are of course possible, and each group can comprise individual writers only, if desired, but each group will need to generate four different versions of each chapter if you wish to use the template provided.

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Barrowquest: text adventure class writing outline

Basic structure and organisation

*Pair could be *individual* to suit teacher's wishes and/or class size (see grouping chart).

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